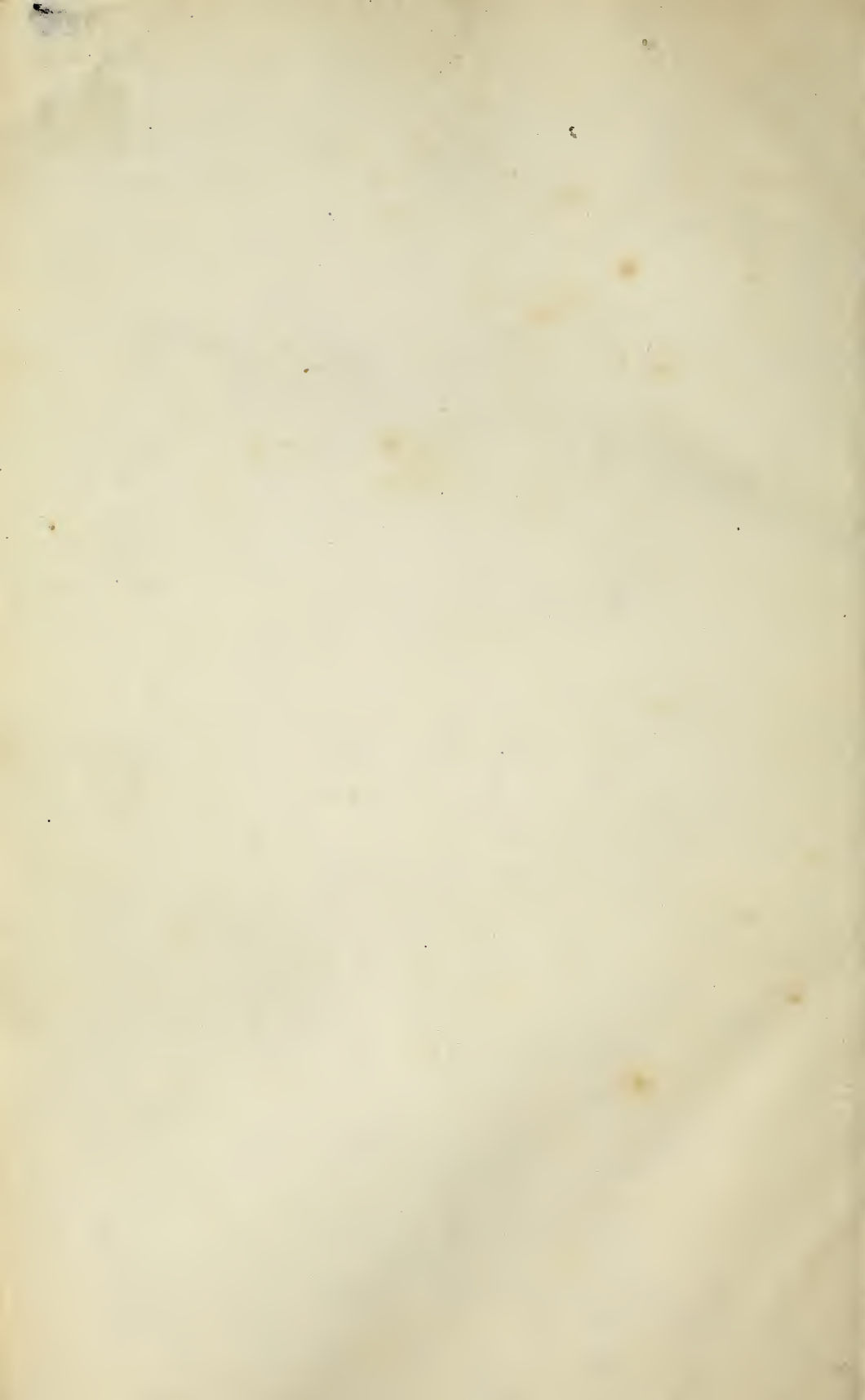


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"Familiar in their Mouths as HOUSEHOLD WORDS."—SHAKESPEARE.

HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

A Weekly Journal.

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS.

VOLUME XIII.

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INSULARITIES.

It is more or less the habit of every country—more or less commendable in every case—to exalt itself and its institutions above every other country, and be vain-glorious. Out of the partialities thus engendered and maintained, there has arisen a great deal of patriotism, and a great deal of public spirit. On the other hand, it is of paramount importance to every nation that its boastfulness should not generate prejudice, conventionality, and a cherishing of unreasonable ways of acting and thinking, which have nothing in them deserving of respect, but are ridiculous or wrong.

We English people, owing in a great degree to our insular position, and in a small degree to the facility with which we have permitted electioneering lords and gentlemen to pretend to think for us, and to represent our weaknesses to us as our strength, have been in particular danger of contracting habits which we will call for our present purpose, Insularities. Our object in this paper, is to string together a few examples.

On the continent of Europe, generally, people dress according to their personal convenience and inclinations. In that capital which is supposed to set the fashion in affairs of dress, there is an especial independence in this regard. If a man in Paris have an idiosyncrasy on the subject of any article of attire between his hat and his boots, he gratifies it without the least idea that it can be anybody's affair but his; nor does anybody else make it his affair. If, indeed, there be anything obviously convenient or tasteful in the peculiarity, then it soon ceases to be a peculiarity, and is adopted by others. If not, it is let alone. In the meantime, the commonest man in the streets does not consider it at all essential to his character as a true Frenchman, that he should howl, stare, jeer, or otherwise make himself offensive to the author of the innovation. That word has ceased to be Old Boguey to him since he ceased to be a serf, and he leaves the particular sample of innovation to come in or go out upon its merits.

Our strong English prejudice against anything of this kind that is new to the eye,

forms one of our decided insularities. It is disappearing before the extended knowledge of other countries consequent upon steam and electricity, but it is not gone yet. The hermetically-sealed, black, stiff, chimney-pot, a foot and a half high, which we call a hat, is generally admitted to be neither convenient nor graceful; but, there are very few middle-aged gentlemen within two hours' reach of the Royal Exchange, who would bestow their daughters on wide-awakes, however estimable the wearers. Smith Payne and Smith, or Ransom and Co., would probably consider a run upon the house not at all unlikely, in the event of their clerks coming to business in caps, or with such felt-fashions on their heads as didn't give them the head-ache, and as they could wear comfortably and cheaply. During the dirt and wet of at least half the year in London, it would be a great comfort and a great saving of expense to a large class of persons, to wear the trousers gathered up about the leg, as a Zouave does, with a long gaiter below—to shift which, is to shift the whole mud-incumbered part of the dress, and to be dry, and clean directly. To such clerks, and others with much out-door work to do, as could afford it, Jack-boots, a much more costly article, would, for similar reasons, be excellent wear. But what would Griggs and Bodger say to Jack-boots? They would say, "This sort of thing, sir, is not the sort of thing the house has been accustomed to, you will bring the house into the Gazette, you must ravel out four inches of trousers daily, sir, or you must go."

Some years ago, we, the writer, not being in Griggs and Bodger's, took the liberty of buying a great coat which we saw exposed for sale in the Burlington Arcade, London, and which appeared to be in our eyes the most sensible great coat we had ever seen. Taking the further liberty to wear this great coat after we had bought it, we became a sort of Spectre, eliciting the wonder and terror of our fellow creatures as we flitted along the streets. We accompanied the coat to Switzerland for six months; and, although it was perfectly new there, we found it was not regarded as a portent of the least importance. We accompanied it to Paris for another six

months; and, although it was perfectly new there too, nobody minded it. This coat so intolerable to Britain, was nothing more nor less than the loose wide-sleeved mantle, easy to put on, easy to put off, and crushing nothing beneath it, which everybody now wears.

During hundreds of years, it was the custom in England to wear beards. It became, in course of time, one of our Insularities to shave close. Whereas, in almost all the other countries of Europe, more or less of moustache and beard was habitually worn, it came to be established in this speck of an island, as an Insularity from which there was no appeal, that an Englishman, whether he liked it or not, must hew, hack, and rasp his chin and upper lip daily. The inconvenience of this infallible test of British respectability was so widely felt, that fortunes were made by razors, razor-strops, hones, pastes, shaving-soaps, emollients for the soothing of the tortured skin, all sorts of contrivances to lessen the misery of the shaving process and diminish the amount of time it occupied. This particular Insularity even went some miles further on the broad highway of Nonsense than other Insularities; for it not only tabooed unshorn civilians, but claimed for one particular and very limited military class the sole right to dispense with razors as to their upper lips. We ventured to suggest in this journal that the prohibition was ridiculous, and to show some reasons why it was ridiculous. The Insularity having no sense in it, has since been losing ground every day.

One of our most remarkable Insularities is a tendency to be firmly persuaded that what is not English is not natural. In the Fine Arts department of the French Exhibition, recently closed, we repeatedly heard, even from the more educated and reflective of our countrymen, that certain pictures which appeared to possess great merit—of which not the lowest item was, that they possessed the merit of a vigorous and bold Idea—were all very well, but were “theatrical.” Conceiving the difference between a dramatic picture and a theatrical picture, to be, that in the former case a story is strikingly told, without apparent consciousness of a spectator, and that in the latter case the groups are obtrusively conscious of a spectator, and are obviously dressed up, and doing (or not doing) certain things with an eye to the spectator, and not for the sake of the story; we sought in vain for this defect. Taking further pains then, to find out what was meant by the term theatrical, we found that the actions and gestures of the figures were not English. That is to say,—the figures expressing themselves in the vivacious manner natural in a greater or less degree to the whole great continent of Europe, were overcharged and out of the truth, because they did not express themselves in the manner of our little Island—which is so very exceptional, that it always

places an Englishman at a disadvantage, out of his own country, until his fine sterling qualities shine through his external formality and constraint. Surely nothing can be more unreasonable, say, than that we should require a Frenchman of the days of Robespierre, to be taken out of his jail to the guillotine with the calmness of Clapham or the respectability of Richmond Hill, after a trial at the Central Criminal Court in eighteen hundred and fifty-six. And yet this exactly illustrates the requirement of the particular Insularity under consideration.

When shall we get rid of the Insularity of being afraid to make the most of small resources, and the best of scanty means of enjoyment? In Paris (as in innumerable other places and countries) a man who has six square feet of yard, or six square feet of housetop, adorns it in his own poor way, and sits there in the fine weather because he likes to do it, because he chooses to do it, because he has got nothing better of his own, and has never been laughed out of the enjoyment of what he has got. Equally, he will sit at his door, or in his balcony, or out on the pavement, because it is cheerful and pleasant and he likes to see the life of the city. For the last seventy years his family have not been tormenting their lives with continual enquiries and speculations whether other families, above and below, to the right and to the left, over the way and round the corner, would consider these recreations genteel, or would do the like, or would not do the like. That abominable old Tyrant, Madame Grundy, has never been of his acquaintance. The result is, that, with a very small income and in a very dear city, he has more innocent pleasure than fifty Englishmen of the same condition; and is distinctly, in spite of our persuasion to the contrary (another Insularity!) a more domestic man than the Englishman, in regard of his simple pleasures being, to a much greater extent, divided with his wife and children. It is a natural consequence of their being easy and cheap, and profoundly independent of Madame Grundy.

But, this Insularity rests, not to the credit of England, on a more palpable foundation than perhaps any other. The old school of Tory writers did so pertinaciously labor to cover all easily available recreations and cheap reliefs from the monotony of common life, with ridicule and contempt, that great numbers of the English people got scared into being dull, and are only now beginning to recover their courage. The object of these writers, when they had any object beyond an insolent disparagement of the life-blood of the nation, was to jeer the weaker members of the middle class into making themselves a poor fringe on the skirts of the class above them, instead of occupying their own honest, honorable, independent place. Unfortunately they succeeded only too well, and to this grievous source may be traced many of our

present political ills. In no country but England have the only means and scenes of relaxation within the reach of some million or two of people been systematically lampooned and derided. This disgraceful Insularity exists no longer. Still, some weak traces of its contemptuous spirit may occasionally be found, even in very unlikely places. The accomplished Mr. Macaulay, in the third volume of his brilliant History, writes loftily about "the thousands of clerks and milliners who are now thrown into raptures by the sight of Loch Katrine and Loch Lomond." No such responsible gentleman, in France or Germany, writing history—writing anything—would think it fine to sneer at any inoffensive and useful class of his fellow subjects. If the clerks and milliners—who pair off arm in arm, by thousands, for Loch Katrine and Loch Lomond, to celebrate the Early Closing Movement, we presume—will only imagine their presence poisoning those waters to the majestic historian as he roves along the banks, looking for Whig Members of Parliament to sympathise with him in admiration of the beauties of Nature, we think they will be amply avenged in the absurdity of the picture.

Not one of our Insularities is so astonishing in the eyes of an intelligent foreigner, as the Court Newsmen. He is one of the absurd little obstructions perpetually in the way of our being understood abroad. The quiet greatness and independence of the national character seems so irreconcilable with its having any satisfaction in the dull slipslop about the slopes and the gardens, and about the Prince Consort's going a-hunting and coming back to lunch, and about Mr. Gibbs and the ponies, and about the Royal Highnesses on horseback and the Royal infants taking carriage exercise, and about the slopes and the gardens again, and the Prince Consort again, and Mr. Gibbs and the ponies again, and the Royal Highnesses on horseback again, and the Royal infants taking carriage exercise again, and so on for every day in the week and every week in the year, that in questions of importance the English as a people, really miss their just recognition. Similar small beer is chronicled with the greatest care about the nobility in their country-houses. It is in vain to represent that the English people don't care about these insignificant details, and don't want them; that aggravates the misunderstanding. If they don't want them, why do they have them? If they feel the effect of them to be ridiculous, why do they consent to be made ridiculous? If they can't help it, why, then the bewildered foreigner submits that he was right at first, and that it is not the English people that is the power, but Lord Aberdeen, or Lord Palmerston, or Lord Aldborough, or Lord Knowswhom.

It is an Insularity well worth general consideration and correction, that the English

people are wanting in self-respect. It would be difficult to bear higher testimony to the merits of the English aristocracy than they themselves afford in not being very arrogant or intolerant, with so large a public always ready to abase themselves before titles. On all occasions, public and private, where the opportunity is afforded, this readiness is to be observed. So long as it obtains so widely, it is impossible that we should be justly appreciated and comprehended, by those who have the greatest part in ruling us. And thus it happens that now we are facetiously pooh-poohed by our Premier in the English capital, and now the accredited representatives of our arts and sciences are disdainfully slighted by our Ambassador in the French capital, and we wonder to find ourselves in such curious and disadvantageous comparison with the people of other countries. Those people may, through many causes, be less fortunate and less free; but, they have more social self-respect: and that self-respect must, through all their changes, be deferred to, and will assert itself. We apprehend that few persons are disposed to contend that Rank does not receive its due share of homage on the continent of Europe; but, between the homage it receives there, and the homage it receives in our island, there is an immense difference. Half-a-dozen dukes and lords, at an English county ball, or public dinner, or any tolerably miscellaneous gathering, are painful and disagreeable company; not because they have any disposition unduly to exalt themselves, or are generally otherwise than cultivated and polite gentlemen, but, because too many of us are prone to twist ourselves out of shape before them, into contortions of servility and adulation. Elsewhere, Self-respect usually steps in to prevent this; there is much less toadying and tuft-hunting; and the intercourse between the two orders is infinitely more agreeable to both, and far more edifying to both.

It is one of our Insularities, if we have a royal or titled visitor among us, to use expressions of slavish adulation in our public addresses that have no response in the heart of any breathing creature, and to encourage the diffusion of details respecting such visitor's devout behaviour at church, courtly behaviour in reception-rooms, decent behaviour at dinner-tables, implying previous acquaintance with the uses of knife, fork, spoon, and wine-glass,—which would really seem to denote that we had expected Orson. These doubtful compliments are paid nowhere else, and would not be paid by us if we had a little more self-respect. Through our intercourse with other nations, we cannot too soon import some. And when we have left off representing, fifty times a day, to the King of Brentford and the Chief Tailor of Tooley Street, that their smiles are necessary to our existence, those two magnificent persons will

begin to doubt whether they really are so, and we shall have begun to get rid of another Insularity.

BEN SERRAQ.

THE French-Algerian magistrate's chaouch or sheriff's-officer, Djilali by name, was recovering a little from the out-of-countenance condition into which he had been thrown by his failure in giving a miraculous turn to the embezzlement of a couple of sacks of wheat from the backs of a pair of donkeys: he straightened his back, stood stiff on his legs, and abruptly entered with ineffable zeal on the discharge of his functions as chief-constable and crier-of-the-court. He felt himself in one of those happy moments when, after having well deserved a good beating, he was ready to transfer the favour to the first person he met. He was an eight-day clock wound up again, when just at the point of running down and coming to a stop. As he opened and shut the police-room doors with the loudest bangings and clappings—shouting for the plaintiffs to appear, and hustling everybody who stood in his way as he swaggered about the antechamber—the assembly present, still impressed with the sack-and-donkey scene they had witnessed, whispered from mouth to mouth and from ear to ear that, in the memory of mekrazeni, so accomplished a chaouch had never been seen.

Suddenly, a confused noise was heard out of doors. As it approached, the sounds grew louder; and at last the ear could distinguish the most energetic oaths in the Arab language, and the music which proceeds from fisticuffs and kicks when applied to divers parts of the human body. Djilali's voice rose above the tumult, and his stick accompanied the melody of his voice. Finally, the door opened, and a group of men, singularly interlaced together, rolled into, rather than entered the room. When Djilali, by a succession of the most skilful movements, had succeeded in putting a little restraint and order into this tempestuous storm of arms and legs, the eye could manage to distinguish a group of five men, four of whom had quite enough to do to enforce on the fifth a little respect. The last-named worthy was of lofty stature and vigorously limbed. His garments torn to shreds, and his sorry face, attested participation in a recent struggle; but his hands, tied behind his back and fastened by a rope to his neck, were evidence that he had not been victorious. His companions held him fast with a degree of caution which showed that even in the state to which he was reduced, they were not quite sure he would not make his escape. Four ropes' ends, which dangled from his wrists and his neck, were tightly grasped with exaggerated uneasiness and tenacity. Scarcely had the five new comers subsided into calmness, when an

unanimous exclamation arose from the midst of the audience, "Tis Ben Serraq! What has he been doing now?"

M. Richard, the presiding magistrate, inquired somewhat severely:

"What has the man done, that you should bring him bound in that cruel way?"

"Tis Ben Serraq!" was the answer he received from the quartette of voices.

"Ah, Ben Serraq! A professional robber belonging to the Sefhha, is he not?"

"The very same!" said the Coryphæus of the associated plaintiffs.

"Yes, sure enough; 'tis I, Ben Serraq," growled the prisoner, in a voice which reminded you of a wild beast roaring at night.

"But I was informed that he had amended his mode of life, and that lately he has been living at peace with his neighbours?"

"I have always lived at peace with my neighbours. I am a good Mussulman, fearing Allah and the law. I am calumniated."

"Hold your tongue," said the court, "and do not speak till you are spoken to."

"It is true," explained plaintiff number one, "that, for some time past, he has let us be quiet, and only committed distant robberies; but a few days since, he stole one of our bullocks."

"Sidi Bou Krari!" roared the savage. "How dare they slander a poor innocent creature like me in that way?"

"But is the fact clearly proved?" the president inquired. "How did it occur?"

"It is as plain as can be," stated plaintiff number two. "There is not the least doubt about the matter."

"That's what you get by serving the French!" muttered Ben Serraq, with the air of a Cato. "What ingratitude, gracious Allah, Lord of the universe!"

At this juncture, Djilali received orders to prevent the accused, by any means whatever, from making lengthy interruptions to the recital of the plaintiffs' wrongs. As to short exclamations that will break forth, the chaouch might allow them to burst from their safety-valve, seeing the material impossibility of confining them within the lips of a subject like the present defendant.

"Come, then," said the court, decidedly, "one of you explain the business."

"Don't mind what they say," Ben Serraq roared out. "They are liars. Besides, they have a spite against me."

"As I said just now," the complainant stated, "the case is plain. Our herds were grazing in the neighbourhood of Ben Serraq's tent. On driving them home in the evening we discovered that a bullock was missing. My brethren and myself immediately took the field, to discover some trace of the robbery, but we could discover nothing. At last, after several days of fruitless search, it entered into our heads to have a look at Ben Serraq's tent. We had suspected him, in

consequence of what had happened some months previously."

"Barbarians!" yelled the untamed innocent; "to violate the tent of an honest Mussulman!"

"But we had no need to enter it; which, moreover, we should not have done without the kaïd's authorisation."

"Quite right," said the magistrate, approvingly.

"We met his wife, as she was coming from the water."

"What an abomination!" howled the biped brute; "to stop a woman on the road!"

"And who, for the promise of a trifling reward, told us the whole affair."

"A capital witness!—a she-beggar, who betrays me!"

"She explained that it was her husband who stole our bullock, in order to provide himself with a store of salt meat."

"Sidi Bou Krari! That a woman should lie like that!"

"She then showed us several goat-skins filled with the meat."

"As if a Mussulman were not allowed to keep salted meat in his tent!"

"And, to remove all doubt as to where the meat came from, she showed us the bullock's head lying in one corner of the tent, still in a state sufficiently preserved to enable us to recognise the animal."

"What a horrible she-vagabond! But her evidence is good for nothing; I had given her a beating not two days before."

"Our only thought then was to seize the wild-boar who is now before you. There was the difficulty; for this son of Satan is as strong as no one else, and can knock down a camel with a blow of his fist."

"What a joke! I am as mild as a sheep."

"Twenty of us met in company, and at dawn of day, informed by his wife—"

"What a pity I did not strangle her, as I meant to!"

"Informed by his wife that he was still asleep, we rushed down upon him; and, after a hard struggle, contrived to bind him in the way you see, as he lay on his mat."

"Sidi Abd-Allah! What treachery! To attack a good Mussulman as he lay asleep!"

"And a good thing it was that we did attack him in that way; for, although he was hardly awake, he managed, while he was wrestling with us, to break one of Oulid Sekrad's legs, and to put out one of Ali Oud Ama's eyes. He smashed in five or six of poor Bou Senan's teeth, and bit Otsman Oud Messassit's back savagely."

"Justice of the Master of the World! is it possible to lie in this way? On the contrary, I have been half killed by you. Don't you see my face is covered with blood?"

"Son of a dog! you well know the blood is from poor Oud Messassit's body."

"Sidi Abd-Allah!" exclaimed Ben Serraq. But it was of no use invoking the saints.

Djilali called for a towel and a basin of water, and with them washed Ben Serraq's face. The experiment established the fact that that interesting individual had not received the slightest scratch, and that the bite on the unfortunate Oud Messassit's back must have been the only source of the stains.

"Well, Ben Serraq," said the president; "although I cannot entertain any reasonable doubt of your guilt, you are, nevertheless, at liberty to speak—let us hear what you have to say in justification."

"Ah! I am allowed to explain! Well; you will soon see! In the first place, my wife is a she-vagabond—everybody knows it—don't they, Djilali?"

But Djilali, who was particularly anxious to conceal all cognisance of the defendant's affairs, only replied,—“May your tent catch fire! Pray, what connection have I ever had with you, that I should know how your wife employs herself?”

"Very well; 'tis of no consequence. But the fact is notorious and incontestable—the she-dog betrays my honour."

"I will take your word for it," said the court; "and then?—"

"She has taken a fancy to Oud Raï, whose people's shepherds have treated me so shamefully. I have often said to her, 'Fatma, my darling, things cannot go on in this manner; your improper conduct sets everybody talking, and a modest and virtuous man, like myself, will soon be the laughing-stock of the whole country, and that on your account. Mind what you are about, else I shall be obliged to beat you; and you are aware, my beloved, that, when I do hit, I hit rather hard.'"

"But I do not see what reference your matrimonial tribulations can have to the business now before us."

"I beg your pardon—you will see directly. I admonished her, therefore, with the utmost gentleness, in accordance with my natural disposition. But it was a waste of time and breath. She persevered in her infamous conduct till I was obliged, as a gentleman, to administer to her and to Oud Raï one day, a considerable number of kicks and thumps."

"But, again I ask, what have these details to do with the theft of which you stand accused? Explain yourself, more clearly."

"What! cannot a man of your great genius see, now, how things have been managed?"

"I have an idea I can; but probably not in the same light as you do."

"What! don't you see that Oud Raï and my wretch of a wife, to be avenged of the beating I gave them, have subtracted the bullock in question without my knowledge, and have cut it up in my tent, in order to compromise me with the authorities? Sidi Bou Krari! it is as clear as the sun, that. Don't you see that I am a virtuous husband calumniated by a criminal wife?"

A subdued murmur, mingled with stifled laughter arose in the assembly at the victim air which Ben Serrag tried hard to assume, and also at listening to the singular pleading which he had improvised.

"Ben Serrag," said the magistrate, in a sceptical tone, "your case must be a very bad one, to compel you to employ such poor arguments for its defence. How could your wife play you such a trick as you describe without your knowledge, since your accusers found your tent filled with the animal's remains, the head particularly being so conspicuous and recognisable an object?"

"What is there extraordinary in that?" asked Ben Serrag, not in the slightest degree disconcerted. "My wife is so artful, and I am so simple and innocent, that she could easily contrive to conceal the matter."

"Come; these are wretched arguments. For a man like you, who has had so many transactions with the authorities, it is not a clever way of getting out of the scrape."

"I invoke Allah and his justice!" screamed Ben Serrag with the throat of a wild boar. "I am a poor persecuted innocent; there is nothing proved against me, absolutely nothing. The case at least is doubtful,—that is incontestable,—and in cases of doubt the law requires me to take an oath. Put me on my oath; I will swear on the Koran, on Sidi Bou Krari, on whatever book you please, I am as innocent as a suckling."

"No doubt. You will take a hundred oaths as readily as one. But, unfortunately for you, I have not forgotten your previous character, and must consider the charge as completely established."

"Allah! Lord of the Universe! Justice is not to be had in this country."

"Honest men will say the contrary, when they hear you are caught, and especially when they see you transported to France: whither I intend requesting you to be sent."

"That's the reward people get for serving the French!" swaggered Ben Serrag, as Coriolanus might have done when banished by ungrateful Rome.

"Not bad, by my faith! You doubtless consider you are rendering people a service by easing them of their purses."

"I have been of service to you in time of warfare, by marching constantly at the head of your columns."

"True; you have sometimes marched at the head of our columns as a guide; but most assuredly you insisted upon heavy wages, as far as I can recollect. Besides, that is no reason why you should be allowed, in recompense, to plunder the whole human race. You ought to have reformed, as you promised you would, and then we should have forgotten the past."

"I am slandered! I am a victim!"

"Retain that idea for your consolation, and hold your tongue. Djilali, take some of the men on guard and lead this fellow to prison."

"Sidi, Sidi!" pleaded Ben Serrag, "can you not deliver me from these bonds, which give me horrible pain?"

"Very well; I will. Djilali, unfasten the ropes, which, in fact, are a little too tight. It is impossible for him to make his escape now; only, take some of the cavalry with you, and keep a sharp eye on him on the way to prison."

"O, Sidi! such precautions are unnecessary. I am as gentle as a lamb." And Ben Serrag made his exit escorted by a numerous suite of mekrazenis, at the head of whom was Djilali, and who, feeling the greatness of his responsibility, marched as if he were carrying the world. But an Arab chief in alliance with the French, named Ben Safi, whispered to the president as soon as the prisoner had disappeared,

"Perhaps you were wrong to let his arms be untied."

"That is rather too good," the magistrate replied. "How, do you suppose, can he contrive to escape from the custody of ten soldiers, and in the midst of the town?"

"I have seen him escape," Ben Safi explained, "under circumstances that would make one believe there was something diabolical in his composition. One night, when he had the impudence to come and rob in my own smala, we contrived to seize him by killing the horse he had stolen from us, and under which it chanced that he was caught as it fell. I had his hands tied behind his back, and I ordered one of my men to kill him like a dog, from behind, with a pistol-shot. The shot was fired; but my gentleman, instead of dropping down dead, as he ought to have done, jumped up as lively as a grasshopper, and disappeared as if a flash of lightning had carried him off. The bullet had only cut the cords which bound him, and had been flattened on the palm of his hand. We were stupefied with astonishment."

"And well you might be!" said the official head of the Arab bureau, beginning to feel a little fidgety. "I now believe I should have acted more prudently if I had forbidden his being unopinioned till he was safely lodged in prison."

"I am sure you would;" interposed Ben Tekrouide, a second friendly chief. "I have always been told that this fellow is a perfect demon, in human shape. At the market of Kremis, he once robbed a man of his ass, without his being aware of the theft, although he was sitting on its back at the time."

"Indeed!" said the magistrate, in a fidget. "I should be very glad to know that he was definitely in custody under lock and key."

"He has the strength of twenty men," observed Ben Maoudj, a third philo-Gallic chieftain. "He once stole a camel laden with wheat from a caravan proceeding to the south; and, as the animal was unable to travel over the rocky road by which he wanted to pass, he took it on his back, wheat

and all, and carried it in that way for half-a-night's march."

"That must be a slight exaggeration," remarked the president, now feeling horribly uncomfortable. "Nevertheless, I should like to be quite sure that he had reached the inside of the prison walls. They are very long about it; they ought to be back by this time."

"Do you wish that I should go and see?" asked Ben Safi, pitying his friend's uneasiness.

"I shall be much obliged to you."

At the moment when Ben Safi was leaving the court, a distant clamour was heard from without, followed by several successive gunshots. A sound of many footsteps was audible, as if a crowd of men were approaching. The doors were thrown open violently, and Djilali made his appearance. His clothes were torn and soiled with dirt, and his right eye seemed to have suffered severely.

"Ouf!" he puffed out, "my back is broken! May Sidi Abd-Allah burn me, if he is a man."

"Explain yourself. Tell me!" said the court, on thorns. "Ben Serrag?"

"Ben Serrag, indeed? If ever you contrive to get him into prison, I will consent to be roasted alive."

"He has escaped, then?"

"How should it be otherwise: he is the devil in person?"

"Have the goodness to tell me how you could have been so stupid as to let a single man break away from ten of you."

"The thing was very simple, and he was not long about it. When we got to the prison, at the instant when they opened the door, he unceremoniously seized the sentinel's gun; he twisted it round like the sails of a windmill, and threw down three-fourths of our number flat on our backs. I immediately rushed upon him; together with the rest who were still on their legs, and you see"—here he exhibited his exterior, including his black and swollen eye—"what I got by it. After having nearly felled me by putting his doubled fist into my eye, he seized me by the skin, and threw me, like a bundle of old clothes, on the top of my comrades. We were all left rolling pell-mell together; and, when I got up, I saw that demon already landed on the other side of the river. The guard came out and fired more than thirty musket-shots at him while he was climbing up the bank; but, bless me! they might just as well have dusted his back with pepper and salt. The bullets were flattened without hurting him."

"The thing is prodigious!"

"After he got to the other side of the river, no one knows what became of him. Some say that he burrowed into the ground, whilst others declare that he took flight with a couple of great black wings that suddenly grew out of his sides and unfolded wide. The

soldiers belonging to the guard will have it that he laid hold of a horse that was grazing there, that he jumped on its back, and set off at full gallop."

LANGTHWAITE.

LANGTHWAITE was in a state of excitement; its morals were perturbed, and its ideas confused; its old landmarks were being swept away, and it did not approve of its new landmarks. Langthwaite notions were being assaulted, and Langthwaite's morality was put to shame. Madame Floriani, the Italian widow, had dared to defy the authority and disturb the influence of Mr. Bentley, the young incumbent. Was Langthwaite to be ruled over by a strange woman who introduced foreign customs, and upset the existing institutions, or was its government to be a virtuous hierarchy as before? Was the cousin of a dean, or the widow of an Italian count, to be considered the first personage of the vale? This grave question was what Langthwaite was called on to decide; and the quiet valley in the heart of the mountains lashed itself into a state of perturbation, strongly suggestive of the famous tempest that was brewed in a teapot.

The origin of the evil was this:—

When old Jacob White the miser, who built Whitefield House of stone and marble, and furnished it with painted deal and calico—died, he left all his wealth to a certain niece of his, his sister's child, who had been born and bred and married in Rome, and who was now Count Floriani's widow. She was his only relative; and, although it went sorely against him to leave his wealth to one who was more than half a foreigner, yet family pride at last conquered national prejudice, and Madame la Comtessa Floriani was made the heiress of Whitefield House and the lands circumjacent. This good fortune brought that Romanised young Englishwoman from the blue skies and rich light of Italy, to a remote village in the heart of the Cumberland mountains.

The society of Langthwaite was peculiar, and beyond measure dull. Dull, because bigoted. The ideas of the denizens ran in the narrowest of all narrow gauges, out of which not a mind dared to move. The peculiarity of Langthwaite was its power of condemnation. Everything was wicked in its more than puritanic eyes. Life was a huge snare; the affections were temptations; amusements were sins; pleasure was a crime; novel-writers "had much to answer for," and novel-readers were next door to iniquity; an actor was a being scarcely less reprehensible than a murderer; and an artist was lost to all moral sense—if, indeed, it ever chanced that artists were spoken of at all, for the Langthwaite intellect did not penetrate far into the regions of art. No one "living in the world" had a conscience, and no foreigners

had the faintest notion of virtue. Langthwaite was the centre of salvation, and outside its sphere revolved desolation and ruin.

There was a national school at Langthwaite, where all the ladies went on different days and at different hours, to superintend, some the work, and some the spelling; and there was a Sunday school where everyone fought for a class. It was the cordon bleu of Langthwaite to have a class in the Sunday school. There were a great many dissenting chapels, and a great many missionary meetings. Religious excitement being the principal dissipation at Langthwaite, school feasts, Dorcas meetings, district visitings, missionary sermons, awakening preachings, and prayer meetings, were infinite. The parish clergyman, Mr. Bentley, said that the parish was well-worked; and so it was. It was worked until its mental condition was in such a state of turmoil and unrest that no one knew exactly what to believe.

To this society came Rosa Floriani, the widow of an Italian artist-count, certainly, and the semi-papistical latitudinarian, perhaps. Why she came to Langthwaite seemed a mystery to many. But it was in truth no mystery:—she thought it was only right to live among her tenants, and to do her best to the society which gave her her fortune.

She was a beautiful woman, about twenty-eight or thirty years of age, with fine blue eyes, and light auburn hair, as soft and shining as silk, braided in two thick wavy masses of imprisoned curls. She was very pale, as if she had lived much in darkened rooms; but her lips were red, and so were her nostrils. She was about the middle size; one of those women with small bones and soft outlines who keep young and supple to the last. She was negligent but coquettish in her dress; with such taste in all her arrangements, that, when she received her visitors in a white muslin dressing-gown and small morning-cap, clinging, like trellis-work against flowers, to the curling hair, she seemed to be far better dressed than the Miss Grandvilles in their silks and satins, and jewellery and lace, and grander than their grand carriage with a footman six feet high. She was excessively indolent in her habits; at least the Langthwaite world said so; never, by any chance, "dressed" at eleven or twelve o'clock, which was the general time for paying morning visits in that part of the world; and always receiving her *monde*, as she called them, upstairs in her dressing-room, in this kind of pretty negligence—very often wearing slippers, not shoes; little slippers of blue, or rose, or brown satin, trimmed round with lace and ribbon, clacking on the ground as she walked, for they had no heels. And indeed it was said that Madame Floriani had been seen in the middle of the day, and even in the evening, in the same undress, which was very near to a crime in

Langthwaite. But her abode was worse than her attire. She had fitted up Whitefield House with all her Roman treasures, and they scandalised Langthwaite. The Miss Grandvilles said they were quite shocked, and Mr. Bentley spoke through his nose, and sighed as he called the pretty woman "heathenish." She had casts of many of the best statuary set about her apartments—Saint Catherine's Marriage, the Madonna, Saint Sebastian, the Judgment of Paris, a Venus or two, and a few martyrdoms. All this was like fire to stubble among the people of Langthwaite. But Madame Floriani, totally unconscious of the effect she was producing, only thought the Langthwaitians very cold in matters of art, and strangely ignorant of real merit.

She was an artist herself; and sometimes when they came in their grand, stiff, expensive, and ungraceful toilettes, they found her dressed in a man's brown holland blouse, girded with a broad leathern band: while a little blue velvet cap, with a long tassel, was stuck jauntily on the top of her graceful head, just above those curly handfuls of bright auburn hair. Whereat they were doubly shocked; and the Miss Grandvilles, very tall, bony and desiccated gladiators, said she was really very unfeminine, and that it positively was not proper.

Madame Floriani's worst enemy was Mr. Bentley. Mr. Bentley was the young incumbent of Langthwaite. He was not more than thirty as it was, and he looked like twenty. He was a tall, round, boyish person, with a round face, and round cheeks highly coloured, an innocent little snub nose, with those wide flat nostrils that make a grey-beard look a youth, light-grey eyes, narrow shoulders, red hands—very red—with the fingers always swollen, as if from chronic chilblains, and a full, unformed mouth, swollen, too, like a boy's. But in spite of this round face, with its ludicrous boyishness, Mr. Bentley had taken up the condemnatory and ascetic side. His sermons breathed more than Judaic severity; hatred of pleasure, hatred of art, hatred of liberation, hatred of everything but extreme Calvinistic tenets, church-going, and missionary meetings. This was Mr. Bentley's profession of faith as far as he dare utter it even in Langthwaite. Yet his solemn looks and severe words were in such ludicrous contrast to that round, red, apple-face of his, which nature intended to express jollity, that more than once Madame Floriani looked up and laughed, saying, with her sweet voice and foreign accent, "But, Monsieur l'Abbé, assuredly you do not believe in yourself when you speak so!"

Which words used to make Mr. Bentley furious. As he said to the Miss Grandvilles, his fast allies, it was very painful to see Madame Floriani's unconverted state of mind. Thus the war between the pretty foreign

woman and the grave young clergyman went on, and Langthwaite stood aghast.

Madame Floriani thought she must do something for the place; so, after every one had called, she began to give parties. Every one went to the first out of curiosity. Even Mr. Bentley who disapproved of her so much that he called nearly every day at Whitefield—to try and convert her—even he went. Though in general he was never seen at any evening party, where the object was not to sing hymns and hear a chapter expounded. But he made an exception. Madame Floriani had arranged her rooms very prettily. She had brought in all the flowers from the greenhouse, and placed them about the hall and drawing-room. She had wreathed the chandeliers with evergreens mixed in with flowers; while large baskets of flowers, evergreens, and moss, were placed on pedestals all about, and brilliantly lighted. The rooms were a flood of light, all excepting the little room off the drawing-room, which old Jacob White had called the study, and which Madame Rosa said was her boudoir; and this was dark. One candelabrum of two wax-lights only, placed on a beautiful little buhl table, reflected by two large mirrors set in deep gold frames of grapes and vine leaves, and falling on a marble statue of Ariadne, set within a draped recess—this was all the light which Madame Floriani allowed in her boudoir. Many objects of art were about; there were models of the Coliseum and the Tower of Pisa, of the Lion in the Rock of Lucerne, of the Parthenon at Athens, and there were busts of famous men—Dante, and Petrarch, and Tasso—and pictures; a Magdalen by Giorgione, a Venus by Correggio, and views of Italy and Greece; and there was a carved book-case full of splendidly bound books, one was clasped with ivory and one had precious stones upon the cover; these, with curtains and draperies of rich rose-coloured silk, made up the furniture of Madame Rosa's boudoir. A new style of room in Langthwaite. They could not understand it. The soft dim light, the living beauty on the walls, the wealth, the art, the management of effect, all perplexed the worthy mountaineers, and went far to convict Madame Floriani of some undesirable characteristics. The Miss Grandvilles, who led public opinion on matters of taste and propriety, peered into it curiously, but stepped back again immediately, as if it had been a sorcerer's cave; and by way of being facetiously condemnatory, spoke to Madame Floriani of the "great white woman in the corner" as something they did not understand, nor quite approve of.

The widow looked at them with the surprised open-eyed look that had become familiar to her since she came to Langthwaite, and then with her silvery good-humoured laugh cried out, "Why, my dear mademoiselle, that is Ariadne!"

"I wonder how you can like those horrible Greek stories!" said the eldest Miss Grandville severely. "We who know so much better things, to encourage those dreadful superstitions and idolatries in any way—it is shocking!"

"But, my dear demoiselle, you don't think that I believe in Ariadne as the Greeks did!" said Madame Rosa. "It's the art, not the goddess one loves!"

"Art!" cried Miss Grandville, disdainfully, "art! What is art, I should like to know, but the worship of the creature. Art is more nearly successful, Madame Floriani, than I am afraid you think it is?"

"Ah, mademoiselle! pity me, spare me! I have been brought up among the great things of art, and opened my eyes on the Coliseum—I have lived where Michael Angelo worked—I have drank in love of art with my first breath. I cannot forget its rich lessons in this ascetic doctrine of yours. On the contrary, I find in your beautiful country so much to love and admire, that I wonder you are so little gifted with the power of appreciating and reproducing the beauty He has created."

This was a long speech for Madame Rosa, and strangely free from foreign idioms. For she was excited, and forgot to be careful.

"My dear Madame," said Mrs. Bentley, solemnly; "you speak of natural religion only."

"Come! come! we must not discuss theology at a soirée," she exclaimed, "that would be a misuse of time indeed. Will you waltz, Miss Grandville!" And before that horrified lady could return an answer, the pretty widow had glided across the room in her peculiar manner of grace and lightness; and, going to the piano, dashed into a maddening waltz. Now, to begin with, only two young ladies of the Langthwaite's society could waltz, and these were the daughters of a retired Captain, who had the good luck to own relatives in London. But they were thought bold and light in Langthwaite (although as good girls as ever breathed), because they went to the opera and the theatres when they were in town, and confessed to the polka, and waltzing. They were very pretty, lively, and good-natured; and when Madame Rosa played her waltz, they both stood up and said, that if others would dance they would. There was no response. Some said, "What bold girls those Miss Winters are!" and others, "Oh! Laura and Helen Winter will go the whole way with any woman of the world! We can't expect anything from them." And one old maid, who had never had an offer, nor heard a word of love in her life, bit the end off the adjective "disgusting," and flounced her shawl—Shetland—tightly round her, as she thanked Heaven, that she had never done such a thing when she was young! And then when Rosa turned round on her

music-stool, with her hands in her lap, and said, "Eh bien! who will dance?" Mr. Bentley came up, "Excuse me, Madame Floriani," he said rather nervously, for the widow looked so arch and lovely, that it required all Langthwaite severity to resist her. "You are a stranger to our customs, and you do not understand us yet. I hope that after you have been among us for a little time we shall be good friends and be able to work together. But we have banished all these frivolities from Langthwaite. My flock, I am happy to say, does not dance."

"Not dance, Monsieur! and why?" cried Rosa, with a burst of laughter, real southern laughter, such as you never hear in polite society in England now.

"I look on dancing, Madame Floriani, as an invention of the enemy."

"What enemy?—the Russians? Oh no, I assure you, les Russes did not introduce the dance. That is drôle; I did not know you were such good patriots down here!" And she laughed again.

"But Madame Floriani," said Miss Grandville, coming to the rescue; "we don't ourselves think dancing proper."

"Not proper!" said Rosa, flushing to her temples, "what monstrous ideas! What impropriety can there be in a party of young people amusing themselves with dancing or anything else convenable?"

"It is a worldly amusement," said Miss Grandville stiffly.

"And a degradation of the immortal nature," said Mr. Bentley.

Madame Rosa looked from one to the other as if they had been Aztecs or Red Indians, or any other unusual specimens of humanity; then, utterly unable to find any sort of answer to such sentiments, turned back to the piano and rattled off a brilliant fantasia, which no one understood and every one thought noisy.

It was the same with the games that Madame Rosa proposed. For, when dancing was forbidden, she thought she would enliven her society by games. At first every one refused to take part in them. They were dull, childish, uninteresting, a waste of time; but at last she gained over some of the younger girls to a stray Cantab or two, whom she had managed to get hold of somehow, no one knew how. "She must have fished them out of the lake," said Miss Grandville; for, indeed, Cantabs were rare animals in Langthwaite, owing to the character for dullness and cant which that beautiful vale had gained in the university. A few used to come, certainly: generally pale young men wearing spectacles and afflicted with colds; but Madame Floriani soon learnt to distinguish the various types, and to fly this type as she would poison. Yet even when she had gone so far as to positively establish games at her soirées, the Miss Grandvilles and the Bentleyites used to sit by grimly, and protest

in loud whispers against the downward course of things in Langthwaite.

Madame Floriani was almost disheartened. Had it not been for that strange little bit of principle in her, that she owed it to the society of her place to do something pleasant for it, she would have given up the attempt of amusing it in despair. But it was a matter of conscientiousness, and she did not like to be defeated. Fortunately, just at the moment when she was most dispirited, she found that she had really made some way. Her fascinating manners, her beauty, her grace, her knowledge of the world, the purity and innocence of her mind, her tact, and her imperturbable good-humour, at last had their weight. Added to which exterior circumstances, that great want of the human heart—that want of life, of pleasure, of sensation, which no ascetic folly can destroy, however it may distort—began to make itself felt. The Miss Winters and many of the younger girls ranged themselves on Madame Floriani's side. They helped her in her soirées; they played at her games; they shared her picnics; they shot at her archery meetings, nay, they even danced to her waltzes; though Mr. Bentley was so angry that he did not speak to Miss Laura when he met her the next day, because he said, as the eldest, she ought to have known better, and was leading her younger sisters to destruction. Which made Laura cry, poor girl; but Helen called their incumbent a detestable little fellow; though she felt as if she had spoken blasphemy when she said it. Altogether Langthwaite was decidedly divided into two parties, because of the waltzing that went on at Madame Floriani's Wednesday evenings.

No one could understand Mr. Bentley. He was the bitterest enemy Madame Floriani had; at least to judge by his conversation; and, yet, if it were so, why did he go so constantly to Whitefield House? and why, if he disapproved so highly of her conduct, did he still continue to attend her evening parties? He never missed one, by any chance, though the Miss Grandvilles and others were only waiting for his lead to follow him to open secession. And why did he turn pale when he saw her coming down the lane, and why did he turn red when he shook her hand? Miss Augusta Grandville, the youngest—she was thirty-four—who had been the beauty of the family and gave herself still the airs of a juvenile—Miss Augusta who had always been his fast ally, his most indefatigable district visitor, his head class teacher, his unfailing satellite, who would not have missed a missionary meeting nor a bible class for all the world—Miss Augusta was uneasy. She did not like these symptoms; she did not like Mr. Bentley's leniency in still continuing to visit Madame Rosa; her voice was for war, an open declared right honest war, and she would be

the incumbent's shield-bearer. So, she said to him one day, after a peculiarly joyous evening at Whitefield House; adding what she thought an irresistible argument, or rather inducement: "If you will give up Madame Floriani, my sisters and I will follow you." At which Mr. Bentley stammered and blushed; then sighed, and said nasally, "We must still hope for her conversion."

Apple-cheeked Mr. Bentley was unhappy. He began even to look so: which was somewhat difficult to that insignificant countenance of his. But apple-cheeked Mr. Bentley was in love. Disguise it as he might to himself and to others, deny it, scorn and reject it—it was none the less true—he was in love with Madame Floriani. True, she was a heathen; but then her natural graces were so many! True, she was a woman of the world, an artist, a lover of frivolity—but then she was kind to the poor and so gentle in her temper! True, she was all that he most reprobated, all that he most abhorred; but then he loved her. What should he do? Marry her, and so lose his influence over the world he had governed so long? But should he lose his influence? The Grandvilles would be angry; perhaps they would leave Langthwaite—he wished they might; but he could manage all the rest. He should be rich too; very rich; and money always gives power. Mr. Bentley had no pious horror of that side of worldliness. Yes, on the whole he should be better off; even in Langthwaite. Yes, he would marry her.

These were his reasonings spread out over many days and weeks, during which time he was much at Whitefield House, often to Madame Rosa's great inconvenience and annoyance. And indeed of late she had adopted the habit of denying herself; an offence which took all Mr. Bentley's love to forgive. For it was a falsehood, he said; and worse—forcing her servants to lie for her. While Rosa only answered, "Mais, Monsieur l'Abbé, it is a thing seen—it is understood—everybody knows what it means when one says that Madame is not at home, or does not receive to-day."

"In the world, that may be," said Mr. Bentley; "but we do not understand such positions here."

"Monsieur l'Abbé! are you not the same here as any where else? What is there so peculiarly virtuous in Langthwaite that you must make laws for yourselves against all the rest of the world, and condemn all the rest of the world? You don't seem to think that there is any crime in pride and hatred, and self-sufficiency, and all that—only in happiness and gaiety of heart. It is monstrous!" cried Rosa, excited.

"Madame Floriani, I beg of you one favour, I have asked it before. Do not call me monsieur l'abbé, I am not a Romish priest, but a

Protestant minister," said Mr. Bentley, gravely.

"Oh, pardon!" cried Rosa, with a toss of her graceful head, and making that pretty little noise with her lips which you hear every Italian make when perplexed or dissatisfied. "Oh, pardon! It is so natural to me to call men of your profession abbés or curés, that I forget. I will try to remember."

"At least there is one great difference between us," said Mr. Bentley, turning very red.

"What do you mean?" asked the pretty widow tranquilly.

"Shall I tell you?" said the incumbent, in a voice that was meant to be caressing.

"If you please," answered Rosa, nestling herself back in her easy chair, and putting up her feet on a tabouret.

"I mean," said Mr. Bentley, after a short pause, and making a desperate rush, like a cart-horse at a fence. "I mean, that we Protestant clergy may marry, and the Romanist priest cannot."

"Yes, that is true; and I don't like married priests," said Rosa quietly.

"Why, Madame Floriani?" asked the incumbent, trembling.

"From association, I suppose. It is distasteful to me."

"Then you would not yourself?—" stammered Mr. Bentley.

"What?" and Rosa lifted up her eyes in astonishment at his voice.

"Marry a clergyman!" said Mr. Bentley, with a kind of roar; and down he came on his knees, first seizing her hand.

Madame Floriani slowly raised herself from a reclining posture. She looked at the young incumbent blushing and trembling on the ground before her; and gently drew away the hand he was holding between his own. And his own were so red! She was going to speak seriously; but—I am grieved to say it of Rosa who ought to have known better—the young man's apple-face and awkward attitude were so ludicrous—the remembrance of all his absurd attempts at solemnity and asceticism came up so vividly in contrast with the ridicule and humiliation of his present position—it was such an unlooked-for offer, and was made so clumsily, that her gravity gave way, and she burst into a fit of laughter.

It was very wrong, and there was no excuse to be made for her; but the situation was very ridiculous—though she should not have laughed for all that. Mr. Bentley started up, seized his hat and very tight umbrella—it was a glorious day in July, but Mr. Bentley patronised umbrellas—and rushed from the house; turning round at the door to say, angrily, "Your place shall know me no more, madame!"

And so war was finally declared, and Miss Augusta Grandville was satisfied. I doubt

if she would have been as content if she had known the full particulars of the casus belli. Mr. Bentley said it was the hardened and impenetrable nature of Madame Floriani—how that he had sought to convert her, and she had answered him only with mockery—and Madame Floriani said nothing. She only laughed; and drew a certain sketch, which she showed to the Winter girls under the strictest vows of secrecy. Which, to their honour be it said, they religiously kept. Though, when Helen Winter met Mr. Bentley the day after she had seen that drawing, she turned so red in trying to look grave, that Laura pinched her arm, and said, “Helen! don’t be silly,” below her breath.

The Bentleyites were the strongest. In a short time Madame Rosa’s Wednesday evenings were almost deserted. All the very good avoided her and her house as if a moral plague existed around her. The Miss Grandvilles, indeed, very nearly cut her. They scarcely bowed when they saw her, and passed her very stiffly even in church. Sometimes they were afflicted with sudden short-sightedness, and did not see her at all. Miss Augusta, through being triumphant, could afford to be magnanimous; and she was a shade less distant in her manner: when met with Mr. Bentley, she was positively gracious. Then the Cantabs went back to their respective colleges, and the leaves began to fall. In the dreary autumn weather—the rain and fog and drizzling mist—that now came on, even her own adherents could not come out so often to see her; so that the sweet face grew sad in thinking of the bright sky and the warm hearts of Italy; and the joyous spirits sank in this social solitude, for want of love and sympathy to sustain it. The days were so grey and dark, she could not even paint; and in the Langthwaite lending library, were only dull histories or biographies. The mud and the rain frightened the soft half-foreigner, and kept her much within doors, moping in a dull Cumberland house, where the clouds came down so low, that they sometimes rested on the roof; and where the only visitors she saw were half-a-dozen good-hearted country girls, with not an idea amongst them beyond Berlin work or babies’ caps; which, to a woman accustomed to the best and most intellectual society of Rome, was scarcely sufficient mental distraction. What was she to do?—fight or retire? She thought of Italy, of her friends there, of the treasures of art, of the beauty, the free life, the ease, the love, the fulness of existence,—and she covered her face in her hands, while tears forced their way through her fingers. Then she thought of Mr. Bentley, and of his offer and of how he looked when he was down on his knees before her; and she laughed till she had a pain in her side. But she could not laugh for ever at Mr. Bentley and his offer, and the ennui of her life began to grow

insupportable. It was reported at last that she was going away. It was Laura Winter who said so first, by Rosa’s permission, one day after she had been at Whitefield House. Madame Floriani had cried, and said that she was ill: the constant damp did not agree with her; and she had grown very thin and sallow rather than pale as she used to be; and she said, too, that she was dull; she could not bear it any longer. Her heart was Italian. It would not live in such an atmosphere; and then she had cried dreadfully, and Laura had cried too, for sympathy. As girls in the country always do.

So, Rosa owned herself beaten. Langthwaite morality had been too strong for her, and Langthwaite coldness too severe. Mr. Bentley had won the battle, and she cared now only for her retreat. She packed up her pictures and her books, her statues and her blue silk curtains; advertised Whitefield House for sale; and sold it well too. A retired sugar-broker bought it, and furnished it in gold and velvet. He had not a picture, nor a bust, nor a book; but he had hangings that cost a small fortune, and an assortment of colours that must surely please some one, as none in the whole rainbow were absent. Rosa had nothing to do with this; all she cared for, was to get out of Langthwaite, and to leave Cumberland clouds for Italian sunshine. She went to make her farewell calls. And, after having kissed all the Miss Grandvilles on both cheeks—for she was a generous, forgiving woman, with a loving heart and a perfect temper, and would not bear malice if she died for it—and after having shaken hands cordially with Mr. Bentley—who, like a foolish fat schoolboy, attempted to sulk—she turned her sweet face to the south, and left a climate that was killing her, and a people who did not love her, for the beauty and the graciousness of Italy.

But she left the seeds of discord behind her that soon bore deadly fruit. Deprived of their patroness, the Florianites sank to the ground. They were snubbed, maltreated, slighted, and all but extinguished. And when Miss Augusta Grandville at last got Mr. Bentley to consent to their marriage, not one of them was invited to the wedding. It was the day of retribution, and the Bentley faction were unsparring.

Madame Floriani did not forget her old adherents when she was established in her Roman home again; and after the Grandville marriage had turned out notoriously ill—for Miss Augusta was imperious, and Mr. Bentley obstinate—she invited the two Winter girls to Rome, and actually sent a man-servant all the way down to Langthwaite to take care of them on their journey. Which royal act nearly canonised her, though Mrs. Bentley said it was ridiculous, “And, good gracious! could not those two girls take care of themselves—if indeed they went at all,

which if they had been her sisters they should not have done?"

Madame Floriani was very kind to her old friends. She took them everywhere, and fêted and petted them beyond measure. Their soft, pretty English faces, with their bright cheeks and long fair ringlets, made a sensation among the dark eyes and raven locks at Rome. The Miss Winters were decidedly the belles of their society—which is a woman's state of paradise. Madame Floriani with her foreign notions set about marrying her young ladies. A task not very difficult; for foreigners like English wives; because they can trust them so much; and English women like foreign husbands, because they are more polite than their own countrymen. So Madame Rosa married them both—one to a count and the other to a baron. And when they went back to Langthwaite, which they did for their wedding trip, the people called them my lord and my lady, and treated them like queens. Even Mrs. Bentley yielded the pas, which was a marvellous distinction, and made up for a great deal of the past. After all, then, Rosa had not entirely lost; the days of her teaching survived in her disciples, for Laura Winter settled at Langthwaite, and remodelled society there after the Floriani system. And now that Mr. Bentley was married, of course his influence was lessened; and all the young ladies who had tried to touch his heart by their austerity, now thought more of Laura's foreign friends who came to see her, and who thought life without innocent laughter not worth the living.

MURMURS.

Why wilt thou make bright music
Give forth a sound of pain?
Why wilt thou weave fair flowers
Into a weary chain?

Why turn each cool grey shadow
Into a world of fears?
Why think the winds are wailing?
Why call the dewdrops tears?

Voices of happy Nature,
And Heaven's sunny gleam,
Reprove thy sick heart's fancies,
Upbraid thy foolish dream.

Listen! I will tell thee
The song Creation slugs,
From humming bees in heather,
To fluttering angels' wings:

Not alone did angels sing it
To the poor shepherds' ear,
But the spherèd Heavens chant it,
And listening Ages hear.

Above thy poor complaining
Rises that holy lay;
When the starry night grows silent,
Then speaks the sunny day.

O, leave thy sick heart's fancies,
And lend thy little voice
To the silver song of Glory,
That bids the World rejoice!

OUR WICKED MIS-STATEMENTS.

WE meant to say no more upon the subject of the strike of Lancashire masters against Factory law, until we had seen the issue of a question raised before one of the superior courts; but the publication, by the National (or, as it should read, Lancashire) Association, of a pamphlet written by Miss Martineau, which attacks our veracity, compels us to speak, or to hazard misinterpretation of our silence. If no question of public justice were involved, we should prefer misinterpretation to the task of showing weakness in a sick lady whom we esteem. We have a respect for Miss Martineau, won by many good works she has written and many good deeds she has done, which nothing that she now can say or do will destroy; and we most heartily claim for her the respect of our readers as a thing not to be forfeited for a few hasty words, or for a scrap or two of argument too readily adopted upon partial showing.

The pamphlet in question is an essay written, as we are told in an introduction, for the Westminster Review, and declined on account of its manner of treatment. When we say that a part of its manner is to accuse this journal of "unscrupulous statements, insolence, arrogance, and cant," and that amidst much abuse of "Mr. Dickens or his contributor"—"his partner in the disgrace," another part of its manner is to abuse Mr. Dickens personally for "conceit, insolence, and wilful one-sidedness," it will be seen that the editor of the Review exercised the discretion of a gentleman. We regret very much indeed that the National (or Lancashire) Association has been less discreet, and, by issuing the paper as a pamphlet at its own expense, has been less friendly to the lady than the lady wished to be to them. We are reluctantly compelled to show, that both in tone and argument Miss Martineau's pamphlet, published by the Lancashire Association to Prevent the Fencing of Machinery, is—we will not forget her claims upon our forbearance, and we will say—a mistake.

And first, as to the tone. Using in her reply the manner pointed out by us, Miss Martineau says, that certain articles in the eleventh volume of this journal* put forward inaccurate statements, "in a temper and by language which convey their own condemnation." But, lest it should be thought that what was wrong in us cannot be quite right in herself, Miss Martineau adds, on the same page, "I like courtesy as well as anybody can do; but when vicious legislation and social oppression are upheld by men in

* Numbers 264, 268, 274, and 279.

high places, the vindication of principle, and exposure of the mischief, must come before consideration of private feeling." Now, confessing for a moment our defect of temper, might we not say, very fairly, that a writer who believes in his heart that resistance to a given law dooms large numbers of men to mutilation, and not few to horrible deaths, may honestly speak with some indignation of the resistance by which those deaths are produced; and that the same right to be angry is not equally possessed by an advocate who argues that the deaths cannot be helped, and that nobody has a right to meddle specially in any way with a mill-owner's trade? But if any dispassionate reader of the articles to which Miss Martineau refers should pass from them to the personal invective with which they are met, he will not fail to perceive that we attacked only what we held to be an evil course of opposition to a necessary law, and abided firmly by the leading features of the case, apart from any personal consideration. We spoke plainly, as the case required, and with the earnest feeling that the case called forth; but it will be found, on reference, that in not one of these articles was an attack made upon any person whomsoever; that the chairman of the National Association was not named; that when cases of accident were necessarily cited, it was enough for us to say "a certain mill," because we spoke of principles and not of persons. It will be found, also, that we took pains to disconnect our plain speaking upon one shortcoming; from a general disparagement of mill-owners, and that we went quite out of our way to occupy no inconsiderable part of these papers with a cordial reminder of the excellent enterprises and fine spirit that belonged to chieftains of the cotton class. Miss Martineau says for herself, that "in a matter of political morality so vital as this, there must be no compromise and no mistake." We felt so too; but also felt that it would be a great mistake and a great compromise of principle, to intrude personalities on the discussion of it.

The history of the present pamphlet, given by its author in a letter to the "Association of Factory Occupiers," is, that wishing to controvert the views of Mr. Horner, the Factory Inspector, she mentioned her desire to obtain the facts on both sides of the question "to a member of your Association, who visited me soon after;" and we cannot help feeling, that for the facts on both sides, which are so clearly only the statements on one side, and (we hope for her sake) for the temper too, the writer is indebted to her faith in the opinions of her friend. She thinks also, that the notes of a barrister who edited the Factory Act show "that it was high time the passionate advocates of meddling legislation should be met by opponents of such legislation who are, by position, likely to be at once dispassionate and disinterested."

To ensure this desirable result, a pamphlet written in a passion, is sent to be published and circulated by the Association directly engaged in maintaining one side of the matter, and composed of the persons most distinctly interested in its issue.

Vexed at the blindness of the barrister-at-law, who is as blind as ourselves, Miss Martineau goes on to say, in her prefatory letter, "What can instigate any lawyer, who cannot be supposed an interested party, to write such a preface as Mr. Tapping's, it is difficult to imagine. On opening it, my eye falls at once on a false statement, which ought to destroy all the authority of the rest." What is the "false statement" of Mr. Tapping? Mr. Tapping wrote that the manufacturers have instituted the National Association of Factory Occupiers, for the special purpose of raising a fund for defraying thereout all fines for not fencing, which may be inflicted upon members "This statement," adds Miss Martineau, "is dated October second, eighteen hundred and fifty-five; whereas the Special Report of your Association, dated July, expressly declares that the Association will pay no penalties awarded under Factory Acts." Miss Martineau's difficulty would have vanished had she known the truth; which is this:—It was announced distinctly, by the founders of the Association, so long ago as the March previous, that they *would* raise money to pay penalties; and it was only when they were made conscious of the danger of the ground so taken, that they forestalled the period of an annual report, and printed the so-called Special Report, in which they took pains to fence themselves off against legal accident. This report was their own stroke of policy, printed for themselves, and to be had only from their office. It was not advertised nor published; it was sent to members—it was there to use. As soon as it came into our hands, through a private source, we made our comments on it; but the date of its being written, though it has July on the cover, is the seventh of August. After it was written, it had to be printed, and it could then only have been by some unlikely chance that any tidings of it could have reached a barrister in London by the second of October. The public reports of the proceedings connected with the formation of the Association had informed him that there was a proposition to pay penalties incurred by occupiers who refused to fence. There was no other source of information open to him.

This point is of importance to us, and we for the second time place it beyond question that, before the appearance of the Special Report, the Association did combine to pay penalties, in obedience to the recommendation of a body of mill-owners who had gone to London with the hope of getting the Factory Act into discredit with the government. The recom-

mentation was read at the meeting* in these distinct terms: "The deputation are of opinion, that a fund of not less than five thousand pounds should be immediately raised; and they suggest that all cases of prosecution which the committee of management are of opinion can be legitimately dealt with by the Association, shall be defended by, and the *penalties or damages paid out of, the funds of the Association.*" Whereupon it was moved, seconded, and unanimously resolved:

"That the recommendation in the report, to raise immediately a sum of not less than £5,000 be immediately carried into execution, and that an additional contribution of one shilling per nominal horse-power from each mill-occupier (making a total of two shillings) be at once called for, to enable the committee to carry out the recommendation to defend, *at the cost of the Association*, all cases of prosecution which they may consider fairly to come within the sphere of the Association."*

We have only to add, that the report including these resolutions, besides receiving a wide notoriety through the newspapers, was printed and circulated by the Association itself, and that a copy of it was obtained by us before we wrote upon the subject. There can be no doubt, then, under what impressions the first members of the Association joined it, and of the accusation under which it justly lay until it thought best publicly to withdraw from a dangerous position.

On this same point, Miss Martineau is of opinion that "Mr. Dickens had better consider, for the sake of his own peace of mind, as well as the good of his neighbours, how to qualify himself for his enterprise before he takes up his next task of reform. If he must give the first place to his idealism and sensibilities, let him confine himself to fiction; and if he will put himself forward as a social reformer, let him do the only honest thing,—study both sides of the question he takes up. How far he is from having done this in the present case, a short, but not unimportant statement may show. He says, by his own pen, or his contributor's [let us say, then, his contributor's] 'But the factory inspectors will proceed for penalties? Certainly they will; and then, if these gentlemen be members of the National Association of Factory Occupiers, they will have their case defended for them and their fine immediately paid.' Yet while the writer declares his information to be drawn from the papers of the Association, he ignores the following conspicuous passages from their First Report"—the retraction then being quoted.

Now, setting aside the likelihood or unlikelihood of Mr. Dickens, to secure his peace of mind, taking ghostly advice from Miss Martineau, there is no doubt that in the said First Report the retraction was conspicuous, and that moreover, it was meant to be conspicuous; but we can hardly think it so con-

spicuous as to have been visible, not merely before it *was* visible, but, as we firmly believe, even before it was so much as conceived. On the same line with the page 605 of this journal, upon which we are lectured, are inscribed the words "Household Words, July 28, 1855." The number dated on that day was, in the usual manner, published three days previously, and issued in Manchester on the twenty-sixth of July, but the report which we failed to do the honest thing by citing was not written—as we find by the date against the chairman's signature—until the seventh of August! When it reached us in September we at once (in our two hundred and eighty-fifth number) made public its purport; but we did not say what we may now say, namely, that there came with it a remark which we believe to be true, and which dates certainly go far to justify: that the Special Report—a thing not contemplated in the rules—was actually suggested by our comments,—that our journal, containing a wide publication of the illegal position of the recusant mill-owners, having reached Manchester on the twenty-sixth of July, was considered by the committee of the Association to necessitate retreat to safer ground by means of a Special Report, and that by the seventh of August, the report was completed and signed; after which, it has been further suggested to us, that July was put upon the cover, not without a hope that somebody might be misled into believing that it had really been produced several weeks sooner than it was. Be that as it may, we should not have supposed that the Association, for the sake of passing a so easily detected deception on the public, would have imperilled the reputation of an honourable lady by leaving uncorrected in her pamphlet a flagrant error, of which it could by no conceivable chance have been ignorant, and by suffering it to go forth, headed in small capitals, MIS-STATEMENTS IN HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

We turn with sorrow to the other contents of the pamphlet. As the pamphlet of the Association we are bound to show why it can only damage the cause of the Association with the government and with the public; we would have wholly spared the writer our present exposure of her mistake, if we could.

The pamphlet begins with some calm wise words about the war, by which the reader is prepared to expect a very different treatment of the immediate topic in hand than that which it is destined to receive. No sooner is the subject touched than the false keynote is struck, and of all persons in the world, it is Miss Martineau whom we find echoing the exaggerated lamentations of an injured interest. "The issue," we are told, "to which the controversy is now brought, is that of the supersession of either the textile manufactures, or the existing factory law. The two cannot longer co-exist." This is one of those remarkable predictions of which we are beginning, by a very long national experience,

* Reported in the Manchester Guardian of March 28, 1855.

to understand the value. If the cry be not ridiculous enough in the form just quoted, how does it look thus—for we have it repeated afterwards in this more piquant way,—“It seems to be agreed by the common sense of all concerned who have any common sense, that our manufactures must cease, or the factory law, as expounded by Mr. Horner must give way.” We believe it was Mr. Bounderby who was always going to throw his property into the Atlantic, and we have heard of Miss Martineau’s clients being indignant against Mr. Bounderby as a caricature. And yet this looks very like him!

The pamphlet then adopts the precise tone of the mill-owners in speaking of the accidents as chiefly “of so slight a nature that they would not be noticed anywhere but in a special registration like that provided by the Factory Act. For instance, seven hundred are cases of cut fingers. Any worker who rubs off a bit of skin from finger or thumb, or sustains the slightest cut which interferes with the spinning process for a single day, has the injury registered under the act.” In the next place the yearly deaths by preventable accidents from machinery, which number about forty, are reduced to eleven, by excluding all machinery except the actual shafts, and throughout the pamphlet afterwards the number eleven, so obtained, is used—once in a way that has astonished us, as it will certainly surprise our readers. Even lower down on the same page the writer slips into the statement, that there are only twelve deaths a-year by “mill-accidents from all kinds of factory machinery.” We wish it were so; but in the last report, published before we made our comments, there were twenty-one slain in six months; one hundred and fifty had, in six months, lost parts of their right hands; one hundred and thirty, parts of their left hands; twenty-eight lost arms or legs; two hundred and fifty had bones broken; a hundred had suffered fracture or serious damage to the head and face.

In the report for the half-year next following, the deaths by machinery in factories were eighteen; one hundred and sixty-one lost the right hand, or, more generally, parts of it; one hundred and eighteen the left hand, or parts of it; two hundred and twenty had bones broken. Thirty-nine, therefore, was the number of deaths in the year last reported (a fresh half-yearly report is at present due), and there was no lack of accidents more serious than the “rubbing off a bit of skin.” Of the factory accidents, we are also told, not five per cent. are owing to machinery. If so, great indeed must be the number of the whole! But it is solely of the accidents arising from machinery that we from the first have spoken, since upon them only the law is founded which we wish to see maintained.

So far as we can understand the figures of the pamphlet, they arise from the ingenuity

of some friend, who has eliminated from the rest those accidents arising out of actual contact with a shaft, and then put this part for the whole. But the law says, “That every fly-wheel directly connected with the steam-engine or water-wheel, or other mechanical power, whether in the engine-house or not, and every part of a steam-engine and water-wheel, and every hoist or teagle, near to which children or young persons are liable to pass or be employed, and all parts of the mill-gearing in a factory shall be securely fenced.” The whole controversy is about obedience to this law, and the consequences of resistance to it. The most horrible and fatal accidents are those connected most immediately with the shafts; the unfenced shafts are the essential type of the whole question, and the fencing of them implies necessarily the general consent to obey the law. For this reason we have, no doubt, in common with other people, frequently represented by such a phrase as unfenced shafts, the whole fact of resistance to the law, without any suspicion of the ingenious turn that might be given to the question on this ground, by an Association not ashamed to employ sleight of hand in argument.

And now that we discuss the figures of the pamphlet, we turn to another of the strange pages, headed *Mis-statements in Household Words*. We make, it is said, the extraordinary statement, that these deadly shafts “mangle or murder, every year, two thousand human creatures; and considering,” the writer adds, “the magnitude of this exaggeration (our readers will remember that the average of deaths by factory shafts is twelve per year) it is no wonder that he finds fault with figures when used in reply to charges so monstrous. When the manufacturers produce facts in answer to romance,” we proceed, it is said, “to beg the question as usual; in this passage: ‘As for ourselves, we admit freely, that it never did occur to us that it was possible to justify, by arithmetic, a thing unjustifiable by any code of morals, civilised or savage.’”

By that admission we abide—and by our figures we abide. This specimen of our mis-statements, of our “begging the question as usual,” is a yet more curious example of a question begged by the accusers, than that other proof of dishonesty which consisted in our not having read a document several weeks before it came into existence. We said, in the passage above cited, that the deadly shafts “mangled or murdered” so many persons a-year; that by the machinery left unfenced in defiance of the law, two thousand persons were mutilated or killed. The writer of the pamphlet has been led to beg wholly the addition of the mutilated on our side, and to set against it, on her side, only the killed, and not all those: only a selection from them of the persons *actually killed on shafts*; advantage being taken of the use of the phrase, deadly shafts, to

represent machinery in unfenced mills. And that it is really meant, in the writer's own phrase to "ignore" the fact that we counted the killed, is evident from a succeeding sentence. "If Mr. Dickens, or his contributor, assigns his number of two thousand a-year, his opponents may surely cite theirs—of three-and-a-half per cent. or twelve in a-year." Our number, certainly, was wrong; but it erred only by under-statement. We might have said nearly four thousand, without falsehood. The number of deaths and mutilations together arising from machinery in factories, has been two thousand, not in a year, but half a year. Because we did not wish to urge the slight cuts, and the few scarcely avoidable mishaps which did not belong fairly to the case as we were stating it, we struck off some two thousand from the number that we might have given.

Our readers may now form some estimate of the strange weakness and unreasonableness of the pamphlet, issued 'by the Factory Association to refute us. There is not one strong point in it that affects the question; there is only one that seems strong, and to that the writer had in her own hands a most conclusive answer. Mr. Fairbairn, in December 1853, reported against the practicability or safety of fencing horizontal shafts. The answer to this is repeatedly contained in the Inspector's reports for the half year ending on the thirtieth of April last, cited at the head of Miss Martineau's pamphlet. Their joint report states, "that a considerable amount of horizontal shafting under seven feet from the floor has been securely cased over in various parts of the country, and that strap-hooks and other contrivances for the prevention of accidents from horizontal shafts above seven feet from the floor, have been and are now being extensively employed in all our districts, excepting in that of Lancashire, and in places mainly influenced by that example." And Mr. Howell is to be found reporting that in the west of England much new fencing had been done, and that the experiment had "been tried on a sufficiently large scale, and for a sufficiently long period to prove the fallacy of the apprehensions that were expressed, as to the practicability and success of fencing securely horizontal shafts. It has proved also that the doing so is unaccompanied by danger." He gives illustration of this from the west of England, adding, however, that "in many instances, and more especially in the cotton factories in that part of my district which is situate in Cheshire and on the borders of Lancashire, little or nothing has yet been done, with some few conspicuous and honourable exceptions, to satisfy the requirements of the law in this respect."

The pamphlet adds the Manchester cry of Fire! and quotes the agent of a fire-office, who gave it as his opinion, that if mills had boxed machinery they ought to pay increased

insurance, because "away they would go without any possibility of salvation." The agent of a fire-office, as we all know, may be the butcher, the baker, or the candlestick-maker, sage or not sage; and to judge by his language in this particular case, not sage. Now, however, when a very large number of mills out of Lancashire are habitually working fenced machinery, will the National Association be so candid as to tell us—not what some local agent has said, but what the fire-offices do?

Mr. Fairbairn's authority against rectangular hooks is quoted in the pamphlet. He says they will increase the danger—would pull all about the peoples' ears. But do they? In the last report which the writer represents as having been consulted for the other side of the question, the inspectors jointly state that "in none of our districts has any accident come to our knowledge from the coiling of a strap round a horizontal shaft where strap-hooks have been put up in the manner recommended." And Mr. Redgrave reports thus from Yorkshire: "With respect to one of the precautions which is considered of great value in Yorkshire and other parts of my district—I mean the strap-hook, for preventing the lapping of the strap upon the revolving shaft; the fact that not an accident has been reported to me during the last six months as having been caused by the lapping of a strap upon a shaft, nor by one of the many thousand strap-hooks which have been fixed up in a very large number of factories, more or less in the different departments of fifteen hundred out of two thousand factories which constitute my district, in a large proportion of which, moreover, they have existed for many years, may be taken as conclusive evidence that the strap-hook does obviate the lapping of the strap, thereby preventing accidents, and does not increase the danger of the shaft and its liability to cause accidents."

Our evidence does not end here, but we must have regard to space. We pass rapidly over the statements in the pamphlet that the men who die, die by their own indiscretion, or, as Miss Martineau expresses it, "climb up to the death which is carefully removed out of their natural reach." This climbing up to death will occur to any sane man or woman, perhaps, as being excessively probable, but it is not true; very few deaths are the result of gross and active carelessness: some arise from a momentary inadvertence; but the reports of inquests constantly sent to us show that at least half who die, can in no fair sense be said to deserve any blame. The pamphlet itself quotes inadvertently the statement of an engineer, that "there should be a ready means of putting on the strap when the mill is in motion;" doing this is a common cause of death. Again, one man is seized by a loose end of his neckcloth, another dragged to his death out

of a cart, because a cloth in it is accidentally blown by the wind against machinery.

Need we do more than allude to such arguments as, that if law compels the fencing of machinery (which while in motion thus can seize the passive stander-by) it ought to compel windows to be barred, because people can throw themselves out of them, and trees to be fenced, because boys can climb up and tumble down? If we take thought for the operative, working in the midst of dangerous machinery, are we, it is asked, to legislate "for every drunken vagabond who lies down in the track—every deaf old man who chooses the railway for his walk?" Need we answer such preposterous inquiries?

We have maintained that it is strictly within the province of the law to protect life, and to prohibit any arrangements by which it is shown that the lives of people in pursuit of their lawful and useful work, are without necessity endangered. Preventable accidents of every kind we have always declared it to be the duty of the legislature to prevent. We are told that Common Law suffices for all cases. It is hardly worth while to spend time in showing that it does not, and cannot provide for these cases. Common Law is the law as established for a given and considerable length of time, and it arose out of the fusion of much special legislation. It knew nothing of steam-engines, and it is impossible that it should have foreseen such cases as arise out of the new systems of railway and factory. Common Law will not make factories safe working places for the operative; special consideration must be given to the subject. When we learn, as Sir John Kincaid reports from Scotland, that a sufficient fencing of three hundred and fifty feet of horizontal shafting cost one factory only six pounds; that the casing of two hundred and fifty-one feet of shafting above seven feet from the floor—more precaution than was absolutely needed—cost another factory only eight pounds four; that a Paisley factory cased three hundred and twenty-four feet of such shafting most efficiently with block iron casing, for no more than sixteen pounds four, we refuse to listen to the cry of Mills on Fire—Ruinous Expense—Manufactures must cease—Fatal Principles—Property going to be pitched into the Atlantic—and simply wait until the recalcitrant Lancashire Mill-owners have done calling names and litigating, and have learnt that if they will not voluntarily take the necessary steps to prevent the more horrible sort of accidents in their mills, they must take them by compulsion.

Miss Martineau suggests the impropriety of any discussion until doubt has been removed by the settlement of a point raised before the Court of Queen's Bench. The whole matter is to remain in abeyance—things are to go on as they are, and there are to be no convictions—while the point mainly

at issue is awaiting the decision of the higher courts. Let us see what this means. The point at issue, as the pamphlet rightly states, is the interpretation of the words "securely fenced;" and it was agreed some time ago that in the case of a certain prosecution for unfenced machinery, the question should go before the Queen's Bench to determine whether machinery could be said to be otherwise than securely fenced when no accident could be shown to have been caused by it; whether the fact that such machinery had led to deaths and mutilations in other mills proved it, or did not prove it, to be insecure in a mill where, as yet, no blood had been shed. The question so raised is an obvious quibble, and even the known uncertainty of the law could scarcely throw a doubt over the issue of a reference to its supreme courts. Meanwhile the issue was raised. The great purpose and business of the Association seemed to be to raise it. One, at least, of the inspectors stood aside from the disputed class of prosecutions till the doubt so raised should be definitively settled. We ourselves now fall under reproof for not solemnly and silently awaiting the decision of the question, whether securely fenced means so fenced as that an accident shall not have happened, or so fenced that an accident shall not arise. We now learn upon inquiry, that while we have been waiting, and the Association has been claiming a twice-pending judicial decision, we find—what do our readers suppose?—that no case whatever awaits the opinion of the Judges!

We believe that we have now answered all the accusations laid against ourselves in Miss Martineau's pamphlet. There is one citation of "actual resolutions of the Association," side by side with our summary of their purport, presented as a "conviction of the humanity-monger," of which we need say nothing, because it cannot fail to suggest to any person only moderately prejudiced, that our summary is very close and accurate indeed.

We will pursue the pamphlet no further, having set ourselves right. There is not an argument, or statement, or allusion in it that is not open to rebuke. It fails even in such small details as when a professor of Literature with a becoming sense of its uses, and that Professor the authoress of *Forest and Game Law Tales*, and of many volumes of *Stories on Political Economy*, should gracefully and becomingly think it as against Mr. Dickens, "pity, as a matter of taste, that a writer of fiction should choose topics in which political philosophy and morality were involved." It fails when accusing us of "burlesque" and "irony," because we put plain things "in the palpable way which a just-minded writer would scrupulously avoid," and have, God knows, with a heart how full of earnestness, tried to make the suffering perceived that must have been involved in all these accidents. It

fails even when against this "philo-operative cant," its writer must needs quote Sydney Smith. "We miss Sydney Smith, it is said, in times like these—in every time when a contagious folly, and especially a folly of cant and selfish sensibility, is in question. This very case, in a former phase came under his eye"—and then we have two notes of what he said against the Ten Hours' Bill: sayings with which, it happens, that the writer of these papers perfectly agrees. When a case really parallel to this, affecting, not the laws of labour, but the carrying on of trade in a way leading sometimes to cruel deaths came under his eye, we did not miss Sydney Smith indeed! The author of the paper upon climbing boys was the last person for Miss Martineau to quote. "We come now," begins one of his paragraphs, "to burning little chimney-sweepers;" and the same paragraph ends by asking, "What is a toasted child, compared to the agonies of the mistress of the house with a deranged dinner?" Palpably put, and with a bitter irony, we fear!

We have done. We hope we have not been induced to exceed the bounds of temperate and moderate remonstrance, or to prostitute our part in Literature to Old Bailey pleading and passionate scolding. We thoroughly forgive Miss Martineau for having strayed into such unworthy paths under the guidance of her anonymous friend, and we blot her pamphlet out of our remembrance.

COMING SOUTH A CENTURY AGO.

MANY amusing books (and many dull ones) come into existence through the clubs which have been following the fashion of the Bannatyne in Edinburgh, the Maitland in Glasgow, and the Camden and Grainger in England. The northern clubs have indulged the most in what the French call luxurious editions. They have benefited by the notion that each subscriber will, in addition to his very moderate subscription, sooner or later print a book for them at his own charge. And when a duke presents to one of these societies the Chartulary of Melrose at the cost of a thousand guineas, and an earl having paid as much for the printing of the Chartulary of Paisley goes on to produce four or five quartos of the *Analecta* of Woodrow, the example of liberality is set upon no trifling scale. As gifts, though not to be refused, are not always well chosen, volumes that are scarcely worth the pains of reading do occasionally appear. This by the way. We have been reading without any sense of pain one of the publications of the Maitland club—a piece of history relating to a family at present extinct in the male line, the Stewarts of Coltness, in Lanarkshire. Authorship ran in their blood. One of their family wrote a domestic narrative in the year sixteen hundred, which was the main source of a genealogical history of the race drawn up by a

Sir Archibald one hundred and seventy-three years later. There were cavalier Coltnesses, and there was a Gospel Coltness; but the Coltness to whom we mean to pay attention in this place is a lady—a literary Coltness, married unto Mr. Calderwood of Polton, in Mid-Lothian. This clever dame descended into England, exactly one hundred years ago, and passed over Holland, on a journey to her brother, a political exile at Aix-la-Chapelle. She wrote a journal, and regarding England through a Scotch mist of her own, took notes in a shrewd way; sometimes canny, and sometimes (as regards the relative merits of the north and south,) of a not wholly unquestionable kind. This lady had been bred up in the family of a distinguished crown lawyer; was accustomed to the best society in Scotland; was in her own family commander-in-chief over an amiable husband; and, if we may venture to state so much, forty years of age, when she, for the first time in her life, came south.

Mrs. Calderwood and her husband travelled from Edinburgh to London in their own post-chaise, attended by a serving-man on horseback with pistols in his holsters and a broadsword in his belt. There was a case of pistols in the carriage, more fit, perhaps, for the use of the lady than of the good-natured laird; who, being a man of accomplishments, took with him a pocket Horace to beguile the hours of wayfaring. They set out on the third of June; and, being on the road each day for twelve or fourteen hours, arrived in London on the evening of the tenth.

On the road of course, one day, the lady dined at Durham, "and I went," she adds, "to see the cathedral; it is a prodigious bulky building." The day happening to be Sunday, Mrs. Calderwood was much shocked at the behaviour of little boys, who played at ball in what she termed the piazzas, and supposed that the woman who was showing her the place considered her a heathen,—“in particular she stared when I asked what the things were they kneeled upon, as they appeared to me to be so many Cheshire cheeses.” Mrs. Calderwood had travelled far into England before she met with any sensible inhabitant; and then the first intelligent native is recorded, and proves to have been a chamber-maid.

“At Barnet we stopped; and while we changed horses, I asked some questions at the maid who stood at the door, which she answered and went in. In a little time out comes a squinting, smart-like, black girl, and spoke to me, as I thought, in Irish; upon which I said, ‘Are you a Highlander?’ ‘No,’ said she, ‘I am Welch. Are not you Welch?’ ‘No,’ said I, ‘but I am Scots, and the Scots and Welch are near relations, and much better born than the English. She took me by the hand, and looked so kindly, that I suppose she thought me her relation because I was not English; which makes me

think the English are a people one may perhaps esteem or admire, but they do not draw the affections of strangers, neither in their country nor out of it."

The general appearance of the southern country is thus pleasantly

O'erlaid with black, staid wisdom's hue :

"The villages to north of Trent are but indifferent, and the churches very thin sown; and, indeed, for a long time one would think the country of no religion at all, there being hardly either Christian church or heathen temple to be seen. The fields on both hands were mostly grass; and the greatest variety and plenty of fine cattle, all of various colours. I admired the cattle much more than the people; for they seem to have the least of what we call smartness of any folks I ever saw, and totally void of all sort of curiosity—which, perhaps, some may think a good quality. . . . As for the inclosing in England, it is of all the different methods, both good and bad, that can be imagined; and that such insufficient inclosures, as some are, keep in the cattle (which is so hard with us in Scotland) is entirely owing to the levelness of the grounds; so that an English cow does not see another spot than where she feeds, and has as little intelligence as the people." Surely the cows are to be pitied, born incapable of taking comprehensive views of things in this flat and unprofitable land. If ever there arose a chance of wider views for the fair traveller, England rose not in her esteem on that account. "Sometimes," she owns, "we had an extensive prospect, but not the least variety, so that we could say there was too much of it. No water, no distinction between a gentleman's seat and his tenant's house, but that he was a little more smothered up with trees." The lady, when she reached London, found the same reason for contempt of Hyde Park as a place of resort; it was naught, because it was quite smothered with trees. She also surprised the crowded Londoners that she thought England on the whole less populous than Scotland, and there is a good deal of right observation in the sketch she gives of England extra-metropolitan a hundred years ago.

"In the first place, look from the road on each hand, and you see very few houses; towns there are, but at the distance of eight or ten miles. Then, who is it that lives in them? There are no manufactories carried on in them; they live by the travellers and the country about; that is, there are tradesmen of all kinds, perhaps two or three of each—smiths, wrights, shoemakers, &c.; and here is a squire of a small estate in the country near by; and here are Mrs. This, or That, old maids, and so many widow ladies with a parsonage house, a flourishing house. All the houses, built of brick, and very slight, and even some of timber, and two stories high, make them have a greater ap-

pearance than there is reality for; for I shall suppose you took out the squire and set him in his country house, and the old maids and widow ladies and place them with their relations, if they have any, in the country, or in a greater town, and take a stone house with a thatch roof of one storey instead of a brick one of two, and there are few country villages in Scotland where I will not muster out as many inhabitants as are in any of these post towns. Then I observed there were few folks to be met with on the road, and many times we could post an hour, which is seven miles, and not see as many houses and people put together on the road! Then on Sunday, we travelled from eight o'clock till we came to Newcastle, where the church was just going in; so that I may say we travelled fifteen miles to Newcastle; and the few people we met going to church upon the road surprised me much. The same as we went all day long; it had no appearance of the swarms of people we always see in Scotland going about on Sunday, even far from any considerable town. Then," adds the Scotch lady, "the high price of labour is an evidence of the scarcity of people. I went into what we call a cottage, and there was a young woman with her child, sitting; it was very clean, and laid with coarse flags on the floor, but built with timber stoops, and what we call cat and clay walls. She took me into what she called her parlour, for the magnificent names they give things makes very fine till we see them; this parlour was just like to the other. I asked her what her husband was. She said, a labouring man, and got his shilling a day; that she did nothing but took care of her children, and now and then wrought a little plain work. So I found that, except it was in the manufacturing counties, the women do nothing; and if there were as many men in the country as one might suppose there would be, a man could be got for less wages than a shilling per day. Then the high wages at London shows the country cannot provide it with servants. It drains the country, and none return again who ever goes as chairmen, porters, hackney coachmen, or footmen; if they come to old age, seldom spend it in the country, but often in an almshouse, and often leave no posterity. Then the export they make of their victual is a presumption they have not inhabitants to consume it in the country, for, by the common calculation, there are seven millions and one half in England, and the ground in the kingdom is twenty-eight millions of acres, which is four acres to each person. Take into this the immense quantity of horses which are kept for no real use all over the kingdom, and it will be found, I think, that England could maintain many more people than are in it. Besides, let every nation pick out its own native subjects who are but in the first generation, the Irish, the Scots, the French, &c., and I am

afraid the native English would appear much fewer than they imagine. On the other hand, Scotland must appear to be more populous for its extent and produce; first, by its bearing as many evacuations in proportion, both to the plantations, the fleet, and army, besides the numbers who go to England, and, indeed, breeding inhabitants to every country under the sun; and if, instead of following the wrong policy of supplying their deficiency of grain by importing it, they would cultivate their waste lands, it would do more than maintain all its inhabitants in plenty." The lady presently becomes severe: "I do not think the soil near London is naturally rich, and neither the corns nor grass are extraordinary. I thought their crops of hay all very light, and but of an indifferent quality; they call it meadow hay, but we could call it tending pretty nearly to bog hay."

Her admiration of things English seems indeed to have been confined pretty closely to its immense number of fine horses. "As for London, the first sight of it did not strike me with anything grand or magnificent. . . . Many authors and correspondents take up much time and pains to little purpose on descriptions. I never could understand anybody's descriptions, and I suppose nobody will understand mine; so will only say London is a very large and extensive city. But I had time to see very little of it, and every street is so like another that, seeing part, you may easily suppose the whole."

Then for the heads of London, your ill-meaning, politician lords, the lady Samson pulls their temple down over their heads. "You will think it very odd that I was a fortnight in London, and saw none of the royal family; but I got no clothes made till the day before I left, though I gave them to the making the day after I came. I cannot say my curiosity was great. I found, as I approached the court and the grandees, they sunk so miserably, and came so far short of the ideas I had conceived, that I was loth to lose the grand ideas I had of kings, princes, ministers of state, senators, &c., which, I suppose, I had gathered from romance in my youth. We used to laugh at the English for being so soon afraid when there was any danger in state affairs; but now I do excuse them. For we, at a distance, think the wisdom of our governors will prevent all those things; but those who know and see our ministers every day, see there is no wisdom in them, and that they are a parcel of old, ignorant, senseless bodies, who mind nothing but eating and drinking, and rolling about in their carriages in Hyde Park, and know no more of the country, or the situation of it, nor of the numbers, strength, and circumstances of it, than they never had been in it. And how should they, when London and twenty miles round it is the extent ever they saw of it?"

There were here some remarks not very

inappropriate, considering that they were written when the Duke of Newcastle was fighting on his stumps, and the ferment concerning Admiral Byng was at its height.

There seems to have been some connection between the Calderwoods and Mr. George Stone Scott, sub-preceptor to the Prince of Wales, afterwards George the Third. Mrs. Calderwood says—"I had frequent opportunities of seeing George Scott, and asked him many questions about the Prince of Wales. He says he is a lad of very good principles, good-natured, extremely honest, has no heroic strain, but loves peace, and has no turn for extravagance; modest, and has no tendency to vice, and has as yet very virtuous principles; has the greatest temptations to gallant with the ladies, who lay themselves out in the most shameful manner to draw him in, but to no purpose. He says, if he were not what he is they would not mind him. Prince Edward is of a more amorous complexion; but no court is paid to him, because he has so little chance to be king." Mrs. C. ! Mrs. C. ! how sweet a dish of scandal ! We will next meet with her setting out in gracious humour, and will not be startled should a ripple come over the current of her thoughts.

"Any of the English folks I got acquainted with I liked very well. They seemed to be good-natured and humane; but still there is a sort of ignorance about them with regard to the rest of the world, and their conversation runs in a very narrow channel. They speak with a great relish of their public places, and say, with a sort of flutter, that they shall go to Vauxhall and Ranelagh, but do not seem to enjoy it when there. As for Vauxhall and Ranelagh, I wrote my opinion of them before. The first I think but a vulgar sort of entertainment, and could not think myself in genteel company whiles I heard a man calling 'Take care of your watches and pockets!' I saw the Countess of Coventry at Ranelagh. I think she is a pert, stinking-like hussy, going about with her face up to the sky, that she might see from under her hat, which she had pulled quite over nose, that nobody might see her face. She was in deshabelle, and very shabby drest, but was painted over her very jaw-bones. I saw only three English peers, and I think you could not make a tolerable one out of them. . . . I saw very few, either men or women, tolerably handsome."

But her woman's heart could not resist the men in regimentals; she was determined, too, to have a good look at them, as her journal tells.

"I went one morning to the park, in hopes to see the Duke review a troop of the Horse Guards, but he was not there; but the Guards were very pretty. Sall Blackwood and Miss Buller were with me; they were afraid to push near for the crowd, but I was resolved to get forward, so pushed in. They were

very surly, and one of them asked me where I would be,—would I have my toes trod off? ‘Is your toes trode off?’ said I. ‘No,’ said he. ‘Then give me your place, and I’ll take care of my toes.’ ‘But they are going to fire,’ said he. ‘Then it’s time for you to march off,’ said I, ‘for I can stand fire. I wish your troops may do as well.’ On which he sneaked off, and gave me his place.”

A few other sketches we give for the sake of their succinctness. Greenwich Hospital “is a ridiculous fine thing.” The view from the hill, there, “is very pretty, which you see just as well in a raree-show glass. No wonder the English are transported with a place they can see about them in.”

We give also as a curiosity, because we wonder how the lady ventured to present to us,—King George the Second in his bedroom at Kensington.

“There are a small bed with silk curtains, two satin quilts, and no blanket; a hair mattress; a plain wicker basket stands on a table, with a silk night-gown and night-cap in it; a candle with an extinguisher; some billets of wood on each side of the fire. He goes to bed alone, rises, lights his fire, and mends it himself, and nobody knows when he rises, which is very early, and he is up several hours before he calls anybody. He dines in a small room adjoining, in which there is nothing but very common things. He sometimes, they say, sups with his daughters and their company, and is very merry, and sings French songs; but at present he is in low spirits.”

Finally, let us show how Mrs. Calderwood brings her acutely haggis-loving mind to bear upon the English ignorance of what is good for dinner.

“As for their victuals, they make such a work about, I cannot enter into the tastes of them, or rather, I think they have no taste to enter into. The meat is juicy enough, but has so little taste that if you shut your eyes, you will not know, by either taste or smell, what you are eating. The lamb and veal look as if they had been blanched in water. The smell of dinner will never intimate that it is on the table. No such effluvia as beef and cabbage was ever found in London! The fish, I think, have the same fault.”

At the want of a sufficiently high smell to the fish eaten by the English, we are very well content to stop, and stop accordingly.

THE ROVING ENGLISHMAN.

THE SHOW OFFICER.

We go stumbling along the unpaved streets of Galatz by the dim light of a lantern carried before us by a servant. The town, although the chief commercial city of the Danubian Principalities, and numbering its inhabitants by tens of thousands, is of course unlighted. The outward civilisation of these countries showy as it appears, has unhappily gone no further, up to the present time, than jewellery

and patent-leather boots. Light, air, and cleanliness are at least two generations a-head of it.

Our hotel, the best in the town, is not better than a Spanish inn on the Moorish frontier. The doors do not shut, the windows do not open. There is a bed, but it is an enemy rather than a friend to repose. The bed-clothes are of a dark smoke-colour, stained in many places with iron-moulds, and burned into little black holes by the ashes of defunct cigars. The bed, bedstead, and bed-clothes are alive with vermin. They crawl down the damp mouldy walls, and swarm on the filthy floor, untouched by the broom of a single housemaid since its planks were laid down. Battalions move in little dark specks over the pillow-case; they creep in and out of the rents and folds of the abominable blanket. On a crazy wooden chair—of which one of the legs is broken—stands a small red pipkin, with a glass of dingy water in the centre. A smoky rag, torn and unhemmed, is laid awry beside it. They are designed for the purposes of ablution.

The walls of the room are very thin; and there is a farewell supper of ladies and gentlemen going on in the next room. I saw the guests mustering as we came in. They were so ringed and chained that they would have excited envy and admiration even at a Jewish wedding. They are all talking together at the top of their voices against the Austrian occupation. The odour of their hot meats and the fine smoke of their cigarettes, come creeping through the many chinks and crannies of the slender partition which divides us. Twice I have heard a scuffling behind my door, and I have felt that an inquisitive eye was applied to a key-hole, from which the lock has long since been wrenched in some midnight freak. Derisive whispering, followed by loud laughter, has also given me the agreeable assurance that my movements are watched with a lively and speculative interest. They appear to add considerably to the entertainment of the company. I am abashed by feeling myself the cause of so much hilarity, and stealthily put out the light. Then I wrap myself up resolutely in a roquelaure, take the bed by assault, and shut my eyes desperately to the consequences; doing drowsy battle with the foe, as I feel them crawling from time to time beneath a moustache or under an eyelid. I am ignominiously routed, however, at last, and rise from that loathsome bed blistered and fevered. The screaming and shouting in the next room has by this time grown demoniacal. My friends are evidently making a night of it: so I begin to wonder whether the talisman of a ducat will not induce a waiter and a lantern to go with me to the steam-boat. I may pace the deck till morning, if I cannot sleep; for the Galatz hotel-keepers have I know protested against

passengers being allowed berths on board the vessels when in port.

The silver spell succeeds. A sooty little fellow, like a chimney-sweep, agrees to accompany me, and we go scuffling among rat-holes, open sewers, sleeping vagabonds, and scampering cats down to the quagmire by the water-side; and scrambling over bales of goods, and a confused labyrinth of chains and cordage, gain the deck of the good ship Ferdinand. A cigar, a joke, and a dollar, overcomes the steward's scruples about a berth, and I wake next morning to the rattling sound of the paddle-wheels.

The boat is very full. It is as difficult to get at the washhand-basins as to fight one's way to the belle of a ball-room. I pounce on one at last, however, by an adroit flank movement, and prepare for a thoroughly British souse, when a young Wallachian—in full dress, and diamond ear-rings; who has just been putting an amazing quantity of unguents on his hair—comes up and coolly commences cleaning his teeth beside me. He looks round with a bright good-natured smile when he has finished, and is plainly at a loss to understand the melancholy astonishment depicted in my countenance.

The deck is crowded with a strange company. There are the carousing party who broke my rest last night. They glitter from head to foot with baubles and gewgaws; but the gentlemen are unwashed and unshorn, and it is well for the ladies that their rich silk and velvet dresses do not easily show the ravages of time and smoke. They are dressed in the last fashions of Holborn or the Palais Royal, and one of the dames, I learn, is a princess, with more ducats and peasants than she can count. She spends a great part of the day adorning herself in her cabin—the centre of an admiring crowd of tinselled gallants, who assist at her toilette, with compliments and with suggestions of a *naïveté* quite surprising.

Then there is a fat old Moldavian lady of the old school. She wears a black great-coat lined with a pale fur, and Wellington boots. Her head is swathed and bound up in many bandages. She wears thumb rings, and smokes continually. Our passengers are indeed of the most motley character, for we have quitted the excellent boats of the Danube Company, and are now on board a vessel belonging to the Austrian Lloyd's, very inferior in size and accommodation, although built for going to sea. The first and second class passengers mingle together indiscriminately, and the whole deck is encumbered with a shouting, screaming, laughing, wrangling mass of parti-coloured humanity. There are Gallician Jew girls, going under the escort of some rascally old speculator to Constantinople, and dressed like our poor mountebank lasses, who go about on stilts at country fairs. They are a bright-eyed kindly race of gipsies and good-natured ter-

magants, with a smile and a saucy word for everybody. Watching them, with great contempt, is a German professor, who has indiscreetly shaved the small hairs from the point of his nose till he has quite a beard on it. There is a long Austrian officer in a short cavalry cloak, who looks not unlike a stork; and there is a small Austrian officer, in a long infantry great-coat, who domineers over him, and is evidently his superior. They are an odd pair, and pace the deck together with a military dignity and precision quite comical. There is a brace of gipsies, hereditary serfs, with dark fiery eyes, rich complexions, and red handkerchiefs tied picturesquely with the striking grace in costume, which distinguished that outcast race in all countries. Then there are Greek and Armenian traders engaged in all sorts of rascally speculations connected with the war and the corn markets—sly, sharp-nosed men who have scraped together large fortunes by inconceivable dodges and scoundrel tricks; who have their correspondents and branch-houses at Marseilles, Trieste, Vienna, Paris, London, and New York; who would overreach a Jew of Petticoat Lane, and snap their fingers at him; who have all the rank vices and keen wit of a race oppressed for centuries, newly-emancipated. All power, wealth, and dominion in the Levant is passing into their hands. Long after I who write these lines shall sketch and scribble no more, the chivalry of the West will have a fearful struggle with them. May Heaven make it victorious! Our party is completed by two bandy beggars, with grey beards and bald heads; a crowd of the common-place men of the Levant, loud, important, patronising, presuming, vile, ignorant, worthless, astounding for their impudence; the captain, a brusque, talkative, self-confident Italian, and his wife, a lady from Ragusa, silent and watchful, with a sweet smile and a meaning eye.

We get under weigh betimes in the morning; for, below Galatz, ships are only allowed to navigate the Danube between daylight and dark, so that in these shortening days they must make the most of it. The noble river is crowded with vessels; and, now and then we meet a valuable raft of timber for ships' masts floating downwards. This will be stopped by the Russians, to the cruel injury of trade. I learn from an Armenian merchant on board, that a mast such as would sell for fifty pounds at Constantinople may be here bought for five pounds or less; so that there will be some grand speculations in timber whenever peace is declared.

At Tschedal, just below Ismail, we come to anchor; and, after a short delay, a trim little boat shoots smartly out from the Bessarabian shore towards us. It is pulled by six rowers, in the peculiar grey great-coats and black leather cross-belts which distinguish Russian soldiers. At the helm is a seventh soldier decorated with a brass badge

and some medal of merit; at the prow stands an eighth; in the seat of honour sits the officer empowered to examine our passports, and to ascertain that our ship carries no military stores or contraband of war. At the bottom of the boat is a pile of muskets, and from the stern flutters the Russian war flag—a blue cross on a white ground.

The trim little boat is soon hooked on to our side, and the officer steps lightly and gracefully on deck. He is a Pole; and, though but twenty-five or twenty-six years old, is already a major of marines. I cannot help thinking also that he is a show-officer. He is dressed within an inch of his life. His uniform would turn half the heads at Almack's; for it is really charming in its elegant propriety and good taste. It is a dark rifle-green uniform, with plain round gilt buttons, and not made tawdry by embroidery. Two heavy epaulettes of bullion, with glittering silver stars, which announce the rank of the wearer, are its only ornament. His boots might have been drawn through a ring, and look quite like kid gloves on his dainty little feet. His well-shaped helmet is of varnished leather, with the Russian eagle in copper gilt upon it; and this eagle and the bright hilt of his sword flash back the rays of the sun quite dazzlingly. We, poor dingy, travel-stained passengers appear like slaves in the presence of a king before him.

He speaks French perfectly. He is excruciatingly polite, and is evidently a man of the world, conscious of being entrusted with a delicate duty; but rather overdoing it. He would be handsome, but for small cunning, or rather roguish eyes, when roguish is used in an undefined sense, and may mean smartness good or bad; but it is difficult to take his measure. He has evidently seen service. His hair is of the light rusty brown of nature and exposure. His face is shorn, except a sweeping moustache peculiarly well trimmed. There are some lines about his face which tell the old story of suffering and privation.

He is, as I have said, courteous—more than courteous. He does not even examine the Greek and Moldo-Wallachian passports; but he pauses over the French and English to see if the visas are correct. Mine he examined more narrowly, and then returned it with a gay débonnaire bow, a polite smile, and a backward step. A Greek keeps up a conversation with him the whole time he remains on board. I fancy there is more in it than meets the ear. In speaking to this fellow the major takes a short, sharp, abrupt, hasty tone of command, like a man in authority pressed for time. The major does not examine the hold of the vessel, nor interrogate any of the Austrian officers. There is evidently a shyness and ill-will between them.

When we have each filed past him in turn,

the Pole draws his elegant figure up to its fullslim height, tightens his belt, and marches with a light gallant step from one end of the vessel to the other. Then he halts at the gangway, faces about, casts a hawk's eye round the ship, and descends the companion-ladder. The trim little bark is hooked closer on; then the grapnels are loosened, and she spreads her light sail to the wind. The rowers shelve their oars, and the next moment she is dashing the spray from her bows, and flying towards the shore with the speed of a sea-gull. At the stern sits the Pole upright as a dart, the sunbeams toying with his helmet—a picture to muse on.

Nothing could have been in better taste than the whole thing. It might have served for a scene of an opera, or a chapter in a delightfully romantic peace novel. I confess I cannot help feeling something like a pitying tenderness for the smart cavalier; who may, a few days hence, be called away to the war, and return to his true love never—he mashed by a cannon shot, or blown into small pieces by a mine—his life's errand all unaccomplished, his bright life suddenly marred. I think, too, how strange and sad is the destiny which can make such a Pole take part in a cause which, if successful, will rivet the chains of his countrymen for ever; and how he would meet his patriot countrymen who have joined the hostile ranks in hundreds for only one faint hope of freedom.

Below Ismail the Danube was a perfect forest of masts, and we had some difficulty in steering our way through the maze of ships. The river is very narrow in many places. A child could easily throw a stone across it. The Turkish and Russian labourers in the fields on the Bulgarian and Bessarabian shores are within hail of each other. And every breeze blows waifs and strays across the narrow boundary. Turkish and Russian wild-fowl, wiser than men, chat amicably together about their prospects for the winter, and call blithely to each other from shore to shore among the reeds. The character of the country on both sides of the river is very much the same—flat and uninteresting. Now and then, however, a charming little valley opens among woods and waters in the distance, and here and there rises a solitary guard-house, or a few fishermen burrow among rocks and caverns. Thirty hours after our departure from Galatz we steam into the crowded port of Sulina, where one thousand sail are wind-bound.

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A NIGHTLY SCENE IN LONDON.

ON the fifth of last November, I, the Conductor of this journal, accompanied by a friend well-known to the public, accidentally strayed into Whitechapel. It was a miserable evening; very dark, very muddy, and raining hard.

There are many woful sights in that part of London, and it has been well-known to me in most of its aspects for many years. We had forgotten the mud and rain in slowly walking along and looking about us, when we found ourselves, at eight o'clock, before the Workhouse.

Crouched against the wall of the Workhouse, in the dark street, on the muddy pavement-stones, with the rain raining upon them, were five bundles of rags. They were motionless, and had no resemblance to the human form. Five great beehives, covered with rags—five dead bodies taken out of graves, tied neck and heels, and covered with rags—would have looked like those five bundles upon which the rain rained down in the public street.

"What is this!" said my companion. "What is this!"

"Some miserable people shut out of the Casual Ward, I think," said I.

We had stopped before the five ragged mounds, and were quite rooted to the spot by their horrible appearance. Five awful Sphinxes by the wayside, crying to every passer-by, "Stop and guess! What is to be the end of a state of society that leaves us here!"

As we stood looking at them, a decent working-man, having the appearance of a stone-mason, touched me on the shoulder.

"This is an awful sight, sir," said he, "in a Christian country!"

"God knows it is, my friend," said I.

"I have often seen it much worse than this, as I have been going home from my work. I have counted fifteen, twenty, five-and-twenty, many a time. It's a shocking thing to see."

"A shocking thing, indeed," said I and my companion together. The man lingered near us a little while, wished us good-night, and went on.

We should have felt it brutal in us who

had a better chance of being heard than the working-man, to leave the thing as it was, so we knocked at the Workhouse Gate. I undertook to be spokesman. The moment the gate was opened by an old pauper, I went in, followed close by my companion. I lost no time in passing the old porter, for I saw in his watery eye a disposition to shut us out.

"Be so good as to give that card to the master of the Workhouse, and say I shall be glad to speak to him for a moment."

We were in a kind of covered gateway, and the old porter went across it with the card. Before he had got to a door on our left, a man in a cloak and hat bounced out of it very sharply, as if he were in the nightly habit of being bullied and of returning the compliment.

"Now, gentlemen," said he in a loud voice, "what do you want here?"

"First," said I, "will you do me the favor to look at that card in your hand. Perhaps you may know my name."

"Yes," says he, looking at it. "I know this name."

"Good. I only want to ask you a plain question in a civil manner, and there is not the least occasion for either of us to be angry. It would be very foolish in me to blame you, and I don't blame you. I may find fault with the system you administer, but pray understand that I know you are here to do a duty pointed out to you, and that I have no doubt you do it. Now, I hope you won't object to tell me what I want to know."

"No," said he, quite mollified, and very reasonable, "not at all. What is it?"

"Do you know that there are five wretched creatures outside?"

"I haven't seen them, but I dare say there are."

"Do you doubt that there are?"

"No, not at all. There might be many more."

"Are they men? Or women?"

"Women, I suppose. Very likely one or two of them were there last night, and the night before last."

"There all night, do you mean?"

"Very likely."

My companion and I looked at one another, and the master of the Workhouse added

quickly, "Why, Lord bless my soul, what am I to do? What can I do? The place is full. The place is always full—every night. I must give the preference to women with children, mustn't I? You wouldn't have me not do that?"

"Surely not," said I. "It is a very humane principle, and quite right; and I am glad to hear of it. Don't forget that I don't blame *you*."

"Well!" said he. And subdued himself again.

"What I want to ask you," I went on, "is whether you know anything against those five miserable beings outside?"

"Don't know anything about them," said he, with a wave of his arm.

"I ask, for this reason: that we mean to give them a trifle to get a lodging—if they are not shelterless because they are thieves for instance.—You don't know them to be thieves?"

"I don't know anything about them," he repeated emphatically.

"That is to say, they are shut out, solely because the Ward is full?"

"Because the Ward is full."

"And if they got in, they would only have a roof for the night and a bit of bread in the morning, I suppose?"

"That's all. You'll use your own discretion about what you give them. Only understand that I don't know anything about them beyond what I have told you."

"Just so. I wanted to know no more. You have answered my question civilly and readily, and I am much obliged to you. I have nothing to say against you, but quite the contrary. Good night!"

"Good night, gentlemen!" And out we came again.

We went to the ragged bundle nearest to the Workhouse-door, and I touched it. No movement replying, I gently shook it. The rags began to be slowly stirred within, and by little and little a head was unshrouded. The head of a young woman of three or four and twenty, as I should judge; gaunt with want, and foul with dirt; but not naturally ugly.

"Tell us," said I, stooping down. "Why are you lying here?"

"Because I can't get into the Workhouse."

She spoke in a faint dull way, and had no curiosity or interest left. She looked dreamily at the black sky and the falling rain, but never looked at me or my companion.

"Were you here last night?"

"Yes. All last night. And the night afore too."

"Do you know any of these others?"

"I know her next but one. She was here last night, and she told me she come out of Essex. I don't know no more of her."

"You were here all last night, but you have not been here all day?"

"No. Not all day."

"Where have you been all day?"

"About the streets."

"What have you had to eat?"

"Nothing."

"Come!" said I. "Think a little. You are tired and have been asleep, and don't quite consider what you are saying to us. You have had something to eat to-day. Come! Think of it!"

"No I haven't. Nothing but such bits as I could pick up about the market. *Why, look at me!*"

She bared her neck, and I covered it up again.

"If you had a shilling to get some supper and a lodging, should you know where to get it?"

"Yes. I could do that."

"For God's sake get it then!"

I put the money into her hand, and she feebly rose up and went away. She never thanked me, never looked at me—melted away into the miserable night, in the strangest manner I ever saw. I have seen many strange things, but not one that has left a deeper impression on my memory than the dull impassive way in which that worn-out heap of misery took that piece of money, and was lost.

One by one I spoke to all the five. In every one, interest and curiosity were as extinct as in the first. They were all dull and languid. No one made any sort of profession or complaint; no one cared to look at me; no one thanked me. When I came to the third, I suppose she saw that my companion and I glanced, with a new horror upon us, at the two last, who had dropped against each other in their sleep, and were lying like broken images. She said, she believed they were young sisters. These were the only words that were originated among the five.

And now let me close this terrible account with a redeeming and beautiful trait of the poorest of the poor. When we came out of the Workhouse, we had gone across the road to a public house, finding ourselves without silver, to get change for a sovereign. I held the money in my hand while I was speaking to the five apparitions. Our being so engaged, attracted the attention of many people of the very poor sort usual to that place; as we leaned over the mounds of rags, they eagerly leaned over us to see and hear; what I had in my hand, and what I said, and what I did, must have been plain to nearly all the concourse. When the last of the five had got up and faded away, the spectators opened to let us pass; and not one of them, by word, or look, or gesture, begged of us. Many of the observant faces were quick enough to know that it would have been a relief to us to have got rid of the rest of the money with any hope of doing good with it. But, there was a feeling among them all, that their necessities were not to be placed by the side of such a spectacle; and they opened a way for us in profound silence, and let us go.

My companion wrote to me, next day, that the five ragged bundles had been upon his bed all night. I debated how to add our testimony to that of many other persons who from time to time are impelled to write to the newspapers, by having come upon some shameful and shocking sight of this description. I resolved to write in these pages an exact account of what we had seen, but to wait until after Christmas, in order that there might be no heat or haste. I know that the unreasonable disciples of a reasonable school, demented disciples who push arithmetic and political economy beyond all bounds of sense (not to speak of such weakness as humanity), and hold them to be all-sufficient for every case, can easily prove that such things ought to be, and that no man has any business to mind them. Without disparaging those indispensable sciences in their sanity, I utterly renounce and abominate them in their insanity; and I address people with a respect for the spirit of the New Testament, who do mind such things, and who think them infamous in our streets.

THE SCAPEGRACE.

I AM the son of my father's old age, but of my mother's youth; he had a son and a daughter, Robert and Susan, not younger than she when I was born into the world; he was of an old county family, and had good possessions, a magistrate, deputy lieutenant, and the rest, but he belonged to a generation before that in which he lived, and passed a yeomanlike and homely life, from the day he led the dance in the great barn at one-and-twenty to that wherein he was borne to the village churchyard, with half the parish in mourning for their benefactor, for his funeral train.

I seem to see him on his strong Welsh pony riding leisurely over his lands, or, with his little son before him, to the neighbouring markets; or watching his beautiful greyhounds upon the hillside, as they follow every double of the wily hare; or at his grand old harvest-homes (a picture that is worth preserving) sitting down at the same table with tenant and labourer without one thought of patronage or condescension, and, "crowned with reverence and the silver hair;" or, in the early September mornings, striding swiftly through the glistening turnip-fields, or at his winter fireside, amidst a great company of friends. What Indian, what Arab ever paid the rites of hospitality more religiously than he? What a home of mirth, and feasting, and unpolished honest fun was that great straggling house of his! The stables, indeed, were terribly near one side of it, and the farmyard had been near the other before his second marriage, but my mother had pushed it back with her delicate resolute hands, and made rookery and garden-ground there instead; the poor folks said that flowers sprang

up under her feet, and in this case they did so literally, but, nevertheless, at all times the old house must have been the most charming in the world. My father doted on his wife, and her influence was always used for good; I was their favourite child, and Robert and Susan knew it; I trust in this little tale of mine I shall not speak more harshly of them than they deserve, nor forget that they are my father's children; but I also have to remember what I owe to my dead mother.

What recurs to me of my childhood is so different from my after-experience of life, that it seems almost to me to belong to the biography of another; the love that was lavished on me, the patience that bore with me, the pleasures that blossomed for me then, at every turn seem not of this same world at all. There was a great armchair which I used to stand up in behind my father, and eat sweetmeats from the dessert-table, which he conveyed to me over his shoulder; also it was a great delight of mine to put his honey, which he preferred to sugar, into his tea, and stir it for him; to take off his massy silver spectacles and endeavour to hitch them upon my small pug nose, and to blow out the flame of the brandy in his mince-pies.

Afterwards I had a little pony of my own; and about the breezy downland I would gallop all day long, after foxhounds or harriers, or even a hoop. It will astonish those who are unacquainted with long undulating downs on a high tableland, to learn that I have followed a common broadish hoop upon windy days, up and down hill for miles; it would leap many feet high at every molehill, bound with incredible rapidity to the valleys, and creep up the opposite ascents quite slowly, until, when near the brow of the rise, the wind would catch it again; and, when it came to the great roads with banks on either side, as is the case in those parts, it would clear them like a deer. Moreover, there was the Thames not far from us, and the most picturesque fishing-village upon it possible; and I would punt myself alone, and quite contrary to orders, upon its broad bright bosom in the summer noons. The glory of wood and cliff, which was wont to fill me with such joy, the swift running mill-races, and the foamy lashers, with the great eel-pods leaning over them, still fill a niche within my mind so deeply that I almost think I might have been a poet, had my "lines fallen upon more pleasant places" afterwards; nay, if suffering, as some say, conduces to the making such a being, I am sure I have learnt in sorrow much to teach in song. I was about nine years old, I think, when my trouble time first began.

My father, getting very aged and ailing, and my mother, being much occupied in attending to him, I was left a good deal to myself. There was indeed a tutor engaged for me, a Mr. Laurence, but of him I did not get much good in any way; he had, however,

distinguished himself at the University, and was recommended by Robert himself, who was then at college. Whether this man was sent by him maliciously to harm me in my father's eyes, I cannot tell, but he was entirely unfitted for his post; being a drunken and immoral person, whose character could hardly have concealed itself from one so astute as his selector.

He took me out to fairs and village feasts, and gave me such a taste for beer and skittles that I took them to be the meat and drink of life. I became extremely fond of tossing for sixpences, also, and conceived an absorbing passion for playing put; indulging in it to such an extent hardly credible in so young a gentleman. Mr. Laurence was much too cunning to let any of this come to my parents' ears while he was with me; but, in the vacations, I used to revisit the haunts he had introduced me to, alone. On one occasion I had come home very tipsy, and could not open the back garden-gate. Robert came out and conversed with me across it, while I divided his name into infinite syllables; and, having satisfied himself of my condition, he went back under pretence of fetching the key. Then he took me sharply by the arm, and led me into the house, and up the stairs into my sick father's room.

"Here is your son Charles, sir," said he. "You wished to see him; but I am afraid he is not quite in a fit state to be talked to."

I muttered a few broken sentences, and stared in a drunken manner from one to the other.

"Robert," said my father, "leave the room."

After a little pause, and when his command had been obeyed, he said,

"My poor boy, can you answer me one question?"

The tears ran down my cheeks for shame (and perhaps a little accelerated by the liquor I had imbibed), and I murmured that I could.

"Have you ever been in this state before, Charles?"

"Yes, sir, I have."

"And who went with you to the public-house to-day?"

"Nobody, sir; nobody, indeed, sir," I answered.

I had thought to please him by declaring no one else to be in fault; but he groaned aloud, and, without looking towards me again, he bade me go away and get to bed.

Fondness for low society, and drunkenness, were just those vices most abhorrent to my father,—and that I had indulged in them both at such an early age, and of my own natural inclination, shocked him beyond measure. My mother came in from his room to mine an hour afterwards, and fell into a passion of tears at my bedside: I was miserable and penitent enough, and she forgave me; but I felt something else had distressed her beside my own delinquencies; I

was now become, openly, the bone of contention between my mother and her step-children.

Susan, who was a fine-looking dark lady, with wicked eyes, tall and straight, with an insolent carriage and manners, and a temper not hard to be provoked,—did not any longer take pains to conceal her contempt for us two interlopers. My mother had little or no money, and her family were of a slightly lower grade than that of my father,—and poor people and low people were equally Susan's aversion. Susan had also a natural hatred of a woman as young and pretty as herself, and was especially jealous of her influence with my father. She had given up the seat at the head of the table with a bad grace, and never let slip an opportunity of annoying her rival; which she easily enough effected by striking at her through me. She remarked, the next day after my escapade, that I was a spoilt boy, and apparently a vicious boy, and that I must be sent to school. Robert also followed on the same side, although in a less obnoxious style. An assent to this plan was obtained from the sick-room, despite my mother's opposition, and to school I went.

Susan wanted me to be sent to Christ's Hospital, as being cheap and good enough, and because its discipline was at that time very severe; but I was despatched to Eton. What a pleasant place was that! The only school, as it seems to me, which the amenities of civilised life have really reached; where, not only amongst the upper boys (who at many other places behave creditably enough) but in the lower forms, the ferocity of the English schoolboy is abated by the knowledge that he is an English gentleman. What healthy lives they led! Scores of them swimming the river at all times, and scores of them learning to swim it, by help of an amphibious being with a pole, and a girth at the end of it, or by the more summary fashion of being chucked in by their friends. What riders were there, too! although riding was prohibited under the form of a severe enactment against wearing straps to their trousers—such an enormity as an Etonian riding without straps not being then contemplated, just as the judge of old thought no particular law necessary against parricide. What leapers of brooks, what runners in paper chases! All these things pleased me hugely, and would have made me happy, if I could have forgotten my mother, and what she suffered for my sake. For myself, I quite dreaded the vacation times, especially as I was getting into worse rather than better favour; I had got tipsy—what Etonian has not?—at Surley, on the fourth of June, and had been swished accordingly, and this had been reported in proof of my evil disposition. I knew who told these tales well enough; and, not being deficient in spirit, I waged an open war against my enemies. When sister Susan predicted my future ruin one day amidst the family assembled, adding, "Don't come

to me for help, sir, when you get into disgrace!" I replied, with some asperity, that in such a case, I would rather prefer going to the evil one for help, which I own was very improper, although it exactly expressed what I meant at the time. Robert, who was a clergyman by this time, reprimanded me for making use of such an expression; my mother entreated me for her sake to keep my temper; the aggrieved party (if Susan were she) insisted on my being beaten; and my poor old father, with quivering voice and shaking hand, besought that his children would not hurry him to his grave, by their disputes, before his time was ripe. This scene was not the last by many, which embitter the memory of boyhood to this day.

I had been unquestionably a good deal spoilt; but I am sure I was of a pliable and loving disposition up to this time. In one winter half-year at school, however, when I was changing from the remove to the fifth form—from the governed to the governing classes—a circumstance occurred which altered my temper as much as my prospects. The captain of the house in which I lodged was a bully; one of the few creatures I ever knew (and a very rare vermin at Eton) who could shut himself up alone with a victim, for the enjoyment of torture. He had always hated and oppressed me; and, seeing his chances of tyranny draw near their end by my advancement, he determined to take it out of me, while he could. He actually locked himself into my room for the purpose of thrashing me with a cricket-bat; and, after a little struggle, in which his superior strength easily prevailed, he did thrash me. I resisted to the utmost, and, wild with rage, threw at him as he left the room, the first weapon within reach, an open penknife. He turned round sharply with a cry, and knocking his side against the door-post violently, the haft was broken off where it was projected, and the blade left in his ribs. It seemed to me,—who was then nothing better than a scapegrace, that, although the full extent of the injury inflicted was accidental, one need have no more scruple about punishing such brutes than in destroying polecats. But the head master thought otherwise. My tyrant had the meanness to say I had provoked the conflict, and then stabbed him with my own hand. So I came back to my father's house an expelled boy.

I had plenty of leaving books given to me, plenty of good wishes, and even a letter from my tutor, explaining the circumstances as he himself (rightly) believed them to have occurred; but my father said, "He will never be my Charlie again." Robert said nothing, but wore a smirk of satisfaction. Susan remarked it was, "just what she had expected from the beginning;" and my mother—I think she saw how it was going to be with me through life—when she came into my room at night, as her

custom was, prayed God to defend me from myself, or to take me away at once out of the pitiless world.

Whenever from that day I answered Sister Susan, she would say; "There, young gentleman, you are doubtless right; but pray don't stab me." While her brother on all occasions eyed me as the Grand Inquisitor might be supposed to have eyed a Jew; and I dare say he would have enjoyed my *auto-da-fé* hugely. *He* had the selection of my next school; and it did a great deal of credit to his choice: it was cheap, it was a long way off, and its studies were not rudely broken in upon by vacations. The boys were shocking little blackguards, and Mr. Parrot, the master, was a shocking big blackguard. He was accustomed to beat me with one end of a threepenny cane until it became frayed at the edges, and then he beat me with the other end. I was employed in regular work for ten hours a-day, except on the afternoons of Wednesday and Saturday and all day on Sunday; at which times I was confined in the frowsy schoolroom for arrears. This last misery, to one like myself, who had been brought up in the open air, became quite insufferable, and at last I ran away. The place was not very far from London; and thither, in preference to going homeward, I determined to decamp.

Now, it so happened that Monday—the day on which I put this design into execution—was that appointed to the French master to come over to Rodwell Academy, I met him upon the road. He was a fine old fellow, who had served in Napoleon's grand army and at Waterloo; and he marched with his stick thrown back over his shoulder, like a sword. I had a bundle of clothing and traps in my hand, and was running like the wind, so that Monsieur Pifar did not require to be a philosopher to discover my intention. "Stop, stop, mon enfant," he shouted, with his stick-sword at arm's length, to bar my passage, "Vat dat you run for, Monsieur Charley, you will not be back for my class, I fear, for the encore une fois, mon cher, since you never do read aright the first time. We will go back together now, to have our leetle deecologue." Now, the leetle deecologue was just what I had timed my escape to avoid; those interesting French and English conversations which we were obliged to hold on Monday mornings, such as, "Will it not be better to ring the bell for candles?" or, "How far is it from this place to Lisle?" So I backed a little, and leaped the hedge on my right hand to avoid his company. The Frenchman charged after me as if he were again at Mont Saint Jean, and we sped over the ploughed land at racing speed. Trusting in my activity and endurance, and willing at all times to make the most I could out of everything, I took him over the stiffest country and across the broadest dykes I could find. Twice in that great

pursuit the teacher fell short of his intention, and into brawling floods. Once he came forth from out a regular bullfincher, which I had burrowed, and slipped under on my stomach like a rabbit; he leaving his short black wig pendant upon the bushes, "hanging so light, and hanging so high, on the topmost twig that looked up at the sky;" but still he kept on manfully, and the weight of my burden began to tell upon me. I could hear his cochons! and mon dieus! more audibly with every stride; and I determined, as a last resource, to try the river. Alas, swimming with one's clothes and boots on, with a bundle on one's back, is very different from the Leander method, and I should have been drowned but for Monsieur Pifar. As it was, I lost my consciousness; and, when it returned, I found him chafing my hands with great solicitude, and calling himself scélérat, and me his enfant,—but for all that he took me back to school. I was to be made an example of, and had two days allowed me to get strong in after I had recovered from my dip; just as pigs are cared for previous to their intended massacre.

Mr. Parrot's kind intentions were, however, frustrated by my being sent for to the death-bed of my father. My mother had not dared to mention my name, so grievously had I been misrepresented to him; but one day he looked about him anxiously, and asked whether he had not another son. From that time, until I tardily arrived, he muttered, "Charlie—Charlie," with all the pertinacity of a dying man. I found him propped up in his wide-spread bed, with all his family around him, nearly at his last. He forgave me all my faults, and spoke most lovingly to me.

"And you Charles, too, have something to forgive I know. Robert shake hands with him, and promise to befriend him when I am gone."

Robert obeyed, and said impressively:—

"I will do the best I can for his good, father."

"And you, daughter Susan, take his hand also," he whispered, for his voice was leaving him. But she drew herself up stiffly, and refused; saying, she could not be so hypocritical for any one, certainly not at such a time as that; neither, for all my father could urge, would she kiss my mother, but she did shake hands with her across the bed.

This sad scene, at length, was over, and I was sent out of the room; nor ever saw the dear old man again. His death, however, did not so move me, as my mother's altered looks; she was pale and thin with watching, and had grown spiritless and haggard from the cruelty of those who should have comforted her; now she was forlorn and widowed, she bowed before their sneers and cutting words, as a lily before the bitter wind. While my father yet lay dead in an upper chamber, Robert and his sister began to talk of money-matters, and

even suggested our departure from the house. The will had left all to them, save one thousand pounds to me, and five hundred pounds a-year to my mother, during her life. Like Hagar and Ishmael were we cast forth, and the places that we had loved and lived in so long, were to know us never more. Ishmael was the first mauvais sujet, and I the last, I thought, as we drove over the hill-top by the wind-mill, and left the little valley behind us for ever.

My hope was to be able to support myself without being a burden to my mother, but she had made her plans far otherwise; I was to be sent to college, at whatever discomfort to herself, before choosing for myself some profession that need not dis sever me from her. Her heart, alas! was so fully fixed on me, that she gave no thought to the deadly disease at work within her, about to take from me, not only my chance of worldly fortune, but the greatest good fortune Heaven can send a man—a loving mother.

Surely, there is no place where men of such various expectations meet upon this earth, on so nearly the same level as at an English University. One small set of men, especially of fast men, often comprehending within it the titled heir of half a county, and the ambitious youth, who is spending his little capital, all that he will have in the world before him, in making merry during his three college years; it requires no effort of his own to thrust back the wretchedness that awaits him, until the very last moment, youth, high spirits, and the society of those who never think of work as a necessity, ignore the dreadful fact as long as possible, and Lord Raffle Oaks and Sir Rayther Rapid, have no reason to think but that some ancestral mansion, or great town-house, awaits in their gay companion, as it does in themselves, a present or future owner. What a fearful training is this for a penniless man! Accustomed as he has been naturally to all sorts of luxury and enjoyment, but to the most deferential and obsequious behaviour from those beneath him, he will one day find the bowing tradesman ready to give him in charge for loitering about his warehouse in suspicious clothing, or the stable groom, who has worn out his hatbrim with servility, to challenge him to fight for beer. There is nothing of this that has not happened again and again, but it did not chance to me; although I could not bring myself to read, I never forgot that my mother's means were narrowed for my sake, and whenever I hunted, or committed an extravagance, I invariably devoted some of my own one thousand pounds, to pay the debt, which legacy for some reason, or other, I had not yet received; riding, indeed, was my chief temptation, and I gave way to it very often, my favourite costume was a cut-away coat, and I took a pride in a certain bandiness of my legs. One day, as I straddled into Hall, with a sporting air, I perceived a well-known face at the high table fix

itself on mine, with cynical smile ; it was that of my reverend brother, who was evidently prepared to see me similarly attired, and when he whispered to my tutor, at his side, I didn't doubt that he was not increasing my favour with that dignitary. If I had been a little nearer I dare say I should have caught the words, *Mauvais sujet*. After the next college examination, indeed, in which I did not take a very distinguished place, my tutor sent for me to his rooms, and thus in his peculiar style delivered himself.

"Mr. Charles Wroughton, your progress here is anything but satisfactory to the authorities; and I should not be doing my duty, Mr. Wroughton, if—if—in fact, we did not do something. The dean also informs me, that never having been to morning chapel for ever so long, we now find your evening chapels diminishing; besides you ought to have explained to me—having been expelled from Eton in so unfortunate a manner—what the circumstances were. Indeed, in short, your friends must, I am sorry to say, be written to with regard to your removal from the—in point of fact—the college."

I said, "Don't trouble yourself, sir, to write to my friends. I will withdraw at once of my own accord;" and I went straight from his presence to the Buttries, and took my name off the books of St. Winifred's. My tutor, who was far from an unkind, although an ungrammatical man, would I knew have taken no such step as this, without the promptings of some evil tongues. My offences were venial compared to those of many of my companions, and had deserved no such punishment.

O what a punishment it was! To have to meet my dear self-sacrificing mother's face, and see it pale before the news I had to tell; to know that from that moment even in her heart, mistrust and doubt of me began to grow; and to feel, as I do feel, that the death which was hanging over her, was brought down at once by this rude shock! She now first seemed aware of her precarious state, and having striven in vain to sell her annuity, at almost any price, she wrote to Robert Wroughton (of whose late wicked deed I had not informed her), to remind him of the words of his dying father, and to know if he was willing to do anything for me. His answer—written by Susan, instead of himself, under pretence of press of business—conveyed his opinion that I ought to be articulated to some honest trade; no definite proposition was mentioned, but merely that suggestion framed expressly to make my mother weep. She did not weep long, kind heart. In three weeks from that time, I was left (at nineteen), an orphan. Alone, with my last friend in the churchyard, I was forced now to look life in the face. I wanted work, employment of any kind; but how was I to get it; whom had I to advise with? My college companions

I determined, wisely, to separate from. The neighbours who lived in my father's county, and who had mostly taken our side in the family quarrel, I was too proud to apply to; Robert, of course, was out of the question.

I wrote to him for what was due to me, and he sent me six hundred pounds, the rest having been deducted for expenses of my schooling, and even for the purchase of my little pony, years ago. I do not know whether he robbed me legally, or not; but I felt so sure that his prudence would not have suffered him to do anything criminal, or actionable, that I took no steps in the matter. Three hundred pounds, I owed for bills at college; and, as may be well supposed, my dear mother had had nothing to bequeath me. I paid all, therefore, and with what remained I started to seek my fortune, whither all other adventurers, from the days of Whittington, have gone—to London.

I took a cheap and dirty lodging in one of the streets out of Golden Square, and stared for some days over its dingy blind, in hopes of something, somehow, "turning up." In that great city, without even an acquaintance to converse with, and with that little capital, on which alone I could count for bare subsistence, dribbling away, I was indeed a pitiable object. No summit of a Caucasian mountain, no depth of a disused lead mine, could have been a more solitary spot to me than that populous town was.

I looked over the *Times'* advertisements with those eager eyes which foresee starvation in the not distant future; I watched for benevolent old gentlemen in the streets, and put my trust in those chance adventures, which are used (in books) to erect colossal fortunes. At last, a "Wanted a youth of good appearance and address, as an accountant," seemed to present to me the hope of a livelihood. The situation was to be had in an office under that little colonnade off Waterloo Place, which looks as if the opera-house had been first projected there; but, afterwards, had been begun again lower down. A dark-some den enough it turned out to be, and the proprietor of it (whom, however, I never saw in broad daylight), was horrible to behold. There was a lurid gleam—if I may say so, made up of the fire of the worst passions—for ever playing over his murky countenance. He never asked me for a reference, but simply proposed his terms of one pound a-week, and bade me take them or leave them; I was in his service for a month or two; but was employed during that period in such an unaccountable manner that I cannot say what I did. I wrote out heaps of law gibberish for him; I drew up hundreds of forms of "I promise to pay;" I was made a witness scores of times to little bill transactions which I did not understand, between the ogre and an infinite variety of strange gentlemen. I took money about for him, to the most diverse habitations; from the very street where my

own lodgings were situated, up to the fashionable squares. He may have been the man who distributes the Secret Service Fund for the government, or he may have been the man who accommodates noblemen and gentlemen on their own personal security, for himself; but, at all events, he was not a man of delicate scruples, or refined notions of honour. I am sure of this, because, when I left him, upon his taking into his service an additional young hand, who seemed to me the quintessence of roguery, he never gave me a sixpence of my salary: a debt which I had foolishly allowed to accumulate.

"You should always have these agreements put in writing, my dear sir," he said, when he wished me good-bye.

I was very bitter-hearted and desperate after this. I thought of living merrily with what little money I had still left, and then of making an end of it. My intercourse with this old rascal had not improved my morals. I was getting, if not Robert Macaire-ish, at least Devil-may-care-ish. I would go to the theatres and Cider Cellars, and see life generally, for nights together, and then I would make a spasmodic effort at economy, and would give sixpence for the right of sleeping in a cab, or would give fourpence for a day's subsistence, in the shape of a sandwich and a glass of ale.

At last, I made up my mind to do what I should have done long before: I was attracted by a gaudy placard upon a dead wall, headed "Wealth, wealth, wealth!" It went on to describe the certain prosperity that resulted to all, who went by the Cobweb Line of Packets to Australia, and I resolved to emigrate. Much of my wardrobe, which was very disproportionate to my slender finances, I disposed of for a few pounds. I had no P.P.C. cards to leave for anybody; and, in three days time from having seen the placard, I was on board the Shaky, bound for the port of Sydney; having seen quite enough, I thought, and to spare, of this side of the world.

The Shaky was an emigrant ship, sailing at a very cheap rate, and in an entirely inefficient state for anything beyond an excursion to the Isle of Wight. There was a great lack of necessaries of all kinds; so much so, that we were reduced to biscuits for the last month. Of comforts there were absolutely none. I had taken with my last money (except a pound or two), a stern cabin berth; and, therefore, my experiences were not worse than other peoples'. The man, who pretended to be the surgeon, might just as well have been the cook; and, on the other hand, the cook—of whose culinary skill, however, there was no great test on board—might as well have been the surgeon. Whenever there was any wind, no matter how favourable, we were forced to shorten sail, for there were only two or three bits of canvass which could bear to be blown against; the ropes were in an equally rotten condition, and the discipline was so ill-

maintained, that we ran one vessel down in broad daylight, and were ourselves in most imminent danger from a fire that broke out in the fore-castle. We were nearly seven wretched months, before we came in sight of the promised land.

All whom I had associated with upon the passage seemed to have some plan or other fixed upon for their future guidance, and by no means appeared anxious to be joined in it by so magnificent a youth as I; for there was no change as yet in my appearance (for what should I have gained by it?) from the days when I companioned with the Saint Winifred swells; and they rightly judged that a gentleman, and especially a fast gentleman, would not be of much service at a squatting run or at the gold diggings. I was as much without a profession, or a notion of getting a livelihood, therefore, when we got view of Sydney, as in the London streets. The sight of land at all, however, was a cheering thing; and as we passed between the lofty Heads, and beheld the forest of masts within the harbour, and the city stretching away on either side, its beautiful wings with tower and steeple rising from the mass, and the pleasure houses and gardens crowning the hills above, it seemed a welcome home enough to a storm-tossed wretch like me.

We were moored alongside a wharf in Darling Harbour, and disgorged all our crew. They went out by twos and up to tens, or if one disembarked alone it was to meet a welcoming hand upon the shore, and to hear a voice that bade him be of good cheer. I was the only one quite solitary and without a friend; and yet the appearance of all around me seemed as though it were at least my native country; the same faces, the same language (a circumstance which certainly makes a colony, however distant, less strange and alien than a foreign land), and even the well-remembered cry of "Cab, sir, cab?" assailed me as if at the Marble Arch or Holborn Hill. The beautiful clearness and pleasant warmth of the air was, however, far other than that of London; and in the Botanic Gardens, where I wandered on the very evening of my arrival, all tropical plants were flourishing without protection from the weather.

I lay that night at a small inn near the docks, and started to seek my fortune—a pursuit I was by this time a little tired of—the next morning. Porters were wanted, glaziers were at a premium, good Scotch gardeners in request, and skilled labourers in the coach-making department, I think; but I saw no advertisement, heard no inquiry, for a young gentleman with half a university education. I purchased some suitable raiment, and took the best choice that offered itself. I engaged myself as a porter at the Darling Dock. I had to work like a horse, but I was very strong, and my earnings were not less than six shillings

a-day. I got humble lodgment, also, in the house of a friendly squatter, who had failed in that particular line of business through his own fault—drunkenness.

He told me plenty of stories of the delights of his own profession—of the snugness of a log-hut—of the choiceness of kangaroo soup. Many an evening over our tea (which he poked into the kettle in company with the sugar, as it is Bush fashion to do) and damper-cake, he spake of this and that clearing, and of crops of maize and wheat; of boiling-houses, of tallow, and of the charms of Australian gelatine; but all his eloquence was spent in vain, until he touched upon cattle-grazing. The danger and excitement of this kind of life seemed indeed infinitely preferable to sweating under weights and burdens. And yet I knew that I was deficient in the diligence and perseverance that must needs be exercised by a good stockman; what wits I had, I felt were of the civilised sort; and I was loth to leave the metropolis, where better things had more chance to befall me than in a far-away squatting district. But the final argument which very near persuaded me to leave Sydney for good (except when I might return to spend my hard-earned money in it on dissipation, at long intervals, as my kind-hearted narrator had done) was the picture he drew of the stockman's Centaur-like life: mounted on swift horses from dawn to dusk, and almost continually engaged in the wildest description of hunting; racing by the side of thousands of cattle—now heading, now turning them, and now having to escape by whip and spur from their horned fury.

"Ah!" exclaimed I, with joy; "you've hit on the very thing. I should like to see the Australian horse I could not ride!"

"A rider?" he replied. "What! A rough rider? Then your fortune's made, and you need not go far to find it. From Murrumbidgee—from Wellington Plains, there are five hundred wild horses in the city, if there's one, at this present."

So, I left my portering to itself for that next day, and accompanied him to a horse-dealer's, and here were, sure enough, fine spirit horses in plenty, and a great insufficiency of jocks. One unhappy youth—no stockman, for he is always a capital rider, but a sort of parody upon the slang tightly-dressed boy of the old country—was just then endeavouring to subdue a mighty quadruped in the straw-yard. Twice he had been flung before our eyes, and there seemed every likelihood of his being flung a third time, when I offered my services to the master. He bade me try, if I thought I could do it better or wanted to get my blessed neck broke. The boy dismounted; and when I got up in his place, I felt that I was myself again, for the first time since I had left Saint Winifred's. What a joyous exultation—what a sense of life and power did I experience

with that fiery steed beneath me! He reared and kicked and plunged, indeed, but I accommodated myself to his motions with ease; we understood each other in five minutes; and in half-an-hour my conquest was complete for ever. So did I do that day, but at a fearful risk to life and limb, to half-a-dozen other horses. The dealer was intensely pleased, and offered me twenty pounds or my pick of all his stud if I would break for him for a week. I chose a horse for the express purpose of demonstrating my veterinary skill, rejecting this and that for great or little blemishes, and fixing at last on the very best. Finally, I returned him his gift, observing, "No, I want permanent employment, and something to keep a horse with, before I accept one." Without so much haggling by nine-tenths as would have happened upon the like matter in England, I undertook an engagement with this man from that day. I was to be rough-rider, farmer, and purchaser, or rather agent, in one. He was to find the money, and I was to receive twelve per cent. of the profits.

For many successive weeks, and even months, did Mr. Charles Wroughton (for I kept my name) exhibit himself upon several scores of steeds, in turn, at the Tattersall's of Sydney; and with such success that the whole stock of the dealer was sold off at very remunerating prices. I received for my share of the transaction alone about two hundred and twenty pounds. I did not in my prosperity forget what I owed my bushman friend; but rejected his advice that I should go to the plains, and purchase stock on my own account, without the intervention of a third party. I reflected that one part of the business only I was certain of—namely, my judgment of the merits of the cattle themselves; but, of driving whole herds of them, of bargaining with honest stockmen, or of combating with marauding bushrangers, I knew nothing.

For more than two years, then, I continued with the horse-dealer; first as his assistant, and latterly as his partner, taking, however, any well-paid engagements to break individual horses that offered themselves during that time. And after that, I set up in business, for myself. I soon bought whole droves of horses, and did a great trade. I dare say it was very unspeculative of me—I dare say it was the height of absurdity, after having got so far—that I did not try my luck up the hills or in the gold country; but I was collecting nuggets fast enough in my own way, and I confess to having no higher desire than that of growing rich. For England, where I had experienced so much unhappiness, I had the most passionate longing. To return, to resume my old position as a gentleman among the best of those I had known at college, or to make new friends, was my darling scheme. Although I have not set down the slights and

insults I had often met with, and the fears that had beset me during my penury, I had suffered from them bitterly at an age and with a disposition that bore them very ill; and I was eager to revisit the scenes of my wretchedness in a better plight. I know it was but a sorry ambition, but I am not a philosopher, nor indeed a wise man of any kind: how should it be expected of a mere *mauvais sujet* and fast man like me? Never, however, shall I cease to be thankful for so much of fastness as prompted me to follow the drag upon the most spirited horses I could get at St. Winifred's; for that part of my university education had been useful to me indeed. When house and land were gone and spent, horse-breaking was most excellent.

A circumstance, slight in itself, which occurred after I had been about five years my own master, determined me still more upon leaving the colony as soon as I had made a sufficient fortune. A man came to my office one day to apply for a groom's place, who had been a servant of my father's and of my half-brother Robert's. Jem had been sent away (I dare say for no good, but I was quite ready to think it a hard case), and had come over to Sydney, as I had done, to try his luck. Seeing my name about the streets, he had applied to me in the hope that I might turn out to be his young master, Charlie. I engaged him, of course, at once, and asked him all manner of questions about the old house and its inmates.

Miss Susan had quarrelled with her brother, and lived elsewhere. Mr. Robert, who had now no cure of souls, saw a deal of company, male and female, and there had been talk of his going to be married at one time, but nothing came of it.

In answer to my inquiry, of whether he spoke of me at all? Jem said:

"Yes; he often does at dinner-time, while I's waiting at table. You goes by a queer name, which I can't mind now; but it means a black sheep."

"A *mauvais sujet*?" I suggested.

"Ah, that's it. Yes; you be a *mauvay sujay*, now, among the gentlefolks."

Whether it was my college education, or my connection with the bill-discounter, or my relationship to Robert, or my intercourse with stable-grooms, which prompted me to use such an expression, I cannot tell, but I said:

"Curse the gentlefolks!" and bade Jem go to his work. I was determined to show them I was not what they were pleased to call me.

In a few days I had well disposed of my stock in hand, and of the goodwill of my excellent business; and, upon reckoning all savings from the hour I set foot in Sydney seven years before, I found myself possessor of twenty thousand pounds. I am not exaggerating it by one shilling; and I doubt not that, if I had remained there until now, my

yearly profits would have averaged about five thousand pounds. But I had enough and to spare as it was, and took my passage in a first-class steamer for Great Britain, with as light a heart as a man might carry, and with but seven-and-twenty years upon my back. The contrast between this voyage and the last was agreeable enough; but my arrival at Southampton quite brought tears of gratitude into my eyes. I was alone as before, and occupied the very same room in the very same hotel that I had slept in previous to my emigration; but in the sight of the world (and I fear in my own sight also) I was a thousand times the better man. My astonishing success at Sydney had of course been much magnified, so that I had been a star amongst my fellow-passengers; yet I was scarcely prepared to see in the arrivals of the next morning's paper, that the great colonial capitalist, Charles Wroughton, Esquire, had returned, after a short absence, to his native land; but so it was.

I took a small well-furnished house in London and found no difficulty in getting nice people to come to it. I made myself real and sterling friends: not because I was richer now than before, but because I had opportunities of making friends, which before could not exist. Upon colonial matters, I am considered so high an authority that I have been more than once consulted by the government; and of private applications from the families of young men about to emigrate I have had absolutely scores. They generally set forth that the youths know several languages (especially dead ones), have the gift of teaching, and play excellently upon the cornet-à-pistons; or sometimes, holding the popular opinion of emigrant virtues, they warrant them able to turn their hand to anything, and with a taste for mechanics. But my invariable reply to all is, "Can he ride?"

I hope, however, that I do not shrink from assisting all I can; that I have not forgotten my own hopeless condition only a few years back; and that, especially, when I come across a poor *mauvais sujet* I give him a helping hand. As for such an expression being applied to myself, May Fair would rise as one man (and woman) in arms against it. If there is a title that becomes me more than another it is—from the haunts of business, a steady young fellow, or—from the drawing-rooms, an eligible young man. Nay to show what a change my reformation (!) has made even in my enemies, I possess this (unanswered) letter:

Dear Charles,—I am delighted to hear of your great success in the colonies and of your safe return to England. We, down in Berkshire, always prophesied as much, from our knowledge of your determination and shrewdness; whenever you shall think proper to come home again, you will find a hearty welcome from many an old friend, and especially from

Your affectionate brother,

ROBERT WROUGHTON.

I should not be at all surprised if the reverend gentleman were to leave all his money—especially if I don't go to see him—to the skittle-playing, school-expelled, extravagant scapegrace, to whom his letter was addressed.

CHIP.

SMALL CHANGE.

By others' faults wise men correct their own, is an aphorism which I have transcribed more than once, with a varying amount of ink-splashes and blots, and with greater or less fineness in the up-strokes and firmness in the down-stroke. It is even probable that many of my readers may have performed the same achievement of calligraphy. By others' wants wise men measure their own, is a maxim which is much less frequently either theoretically studied or practically carried out. Yet it is as good a maxim as the other—better, I will say; because, although faults are a moving-spring of considerable power in the mechanism of human society, wants are even yet more effective in their action on the cogs and wheels which keep life a-going.

We are grumbling a little, and are likely to grumble more, about the anticipated want of a penny in our circulation, without reflecting that, as half a loaf is better than no bread, so mils and half-cents are better than no coppers at all. A wail is uttered by an opposite neighbour, which ought to make us hug ourselves in our riches both present and in contemplation. If Midas was punished by the conversion of whatever he touched into gold, nations in like manner are made to do penance by having nothing but golden and large silver coin to handle. The Oran (Algerian) newspapers state that the country is at its wit's end for what all Frenchmen are so dearly fond of—change. Buyers and sellers are equally in a fix how to regulate the odd cash left when their transactions are finished: all kinds of tricks are played to find up small change, which remains unfindable. For instance, an individual who dare not smoke a single pipe of tobacco if you offered him a sovereign to do so, rushed into Madame Levillain's shop in a red-hot hurry, asked for a one-sou cigar, laid down a five-franc piece, and, with a sickly smile, requested his change.

"Monsieur," said Madame, with dignity, "keep your piece of silver. You will pay me for the cigar when you can."

She cunningly preferred risking the loss of her ware to shortening her stock of that precious change, of which she has not always a supply. In order to appreciate the value of halfpence, and the untold treasure you possess in a copper coal-scuttle and a series of bright stew-pans, ranging from least to little, through big, biggest, and

very biggest of all, you ought to witness the despair of Algerian shopkeepers when you purchase of them some three-halfpenny article, and treacherously slide beneath their very nose a great piece of silver; you ought to behold the porters who have received a douro (four shillings and sixpence) in payment for a twopenny job, running about from door to door, begging and praying for décimes. They would often be justified in keeping the whole piece, on the ground that they had fairly earned the balance. In former times, as in Naples and elsewhere, when you changed a silver five-franc piece for smaller coin, especially for copper, you easily got a discount of ten centimes. But although the five-franc piece retains its credit as firmly as ever, not only can you get no discount on it now, but it is often impossible to change it at all.

The cause of this terrible scarcity of coppers, which may, before long, even make itself felt in England, arises from a curious spot, if I may apply the word spot to so vast a tract as the Great African Desert. The inhabitants of the Sahara, in consequence of certain movements, transactions, and advancements, have absorbed all the current small change in Algeria. Even the new, light, French copper coinage is hailed with delight by the children of the sands; the coins are greedily imported under circumstances the most flattering to themselves (the sous). Another thirsty sponge, which sucks up an immensity of copper, is Morocco. It appears that the first stray copper utensil that comes to hand, is instantly seized by one of the innumerable coiners of base money, whose clumsy wares, rude and worthless as they are, are nevertheless used as change in the open market. The more closely you look at Africa, the less you are surprised at the disappearance of small coins when once they have entered its boundaries. It has always been a coinless country, regarding it in a general point of view. Shells have been even used as the money wherewith to purchase slaves; a fine black young woman was worth so many thousand cowries. Amidst the populous tribes of the interior the drollest substitutes for a currency have been employed. It is not therefore a few handfuls of halfpence and fourpenny pieces, such as an electioneering candidate would scatter amidst a crowd, that will fill up this yawning vacuum of cash. The natives are daily becoming better and better acquainted with the uses of money, in consequence of their intercourse with or subjection to various European nations at various points of the immense line of coast which runs from Egypt, past Algeria, past Sierra Leone, round the Gold Coast, round the Cape of Good Hope, past Madagascar, to the top of the Red Sea. Add to this, that in Algeria, the bank in which the Arabs place the most confidence, is mostly a bank whereon the

wild thyme grows. An unsuspected hole in the ground is made the treasury of superfluous specie; the father dare not give the son the clue to the secret hiding-place, for fear the son should anticipate his heritage by an unflial employment of his dagger or his pistol. And so the hoard remains safe till prudent papa, accepting an invitation to a throat-cutting party, starts on some pleasant shooting excursion, from which he never comes back; and his capital, thus invested in land, is lost to his heirs, and what is worse, to Africa. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at that loud complaints are made in Algiers, and even in France, of the scarcity of small change. In the interior of Algiers, things are in such a state, that before buying anything which cannot be returned to the owner—such as a dinner, or refreshments—prudent people, who do not wish to get into debt without knowing it, take care to inquire beforehand whether the vendor can give them change. Amongst the natives especially, to get change for a five-franc piece is a difficult effort of diplomacy. A traveller who wanted to buy some medals from the Kabyles of Taourga, and who had no small change, lost half a day in parleying with all the capitalists of the population before he could succeed in exchanging a miserable five-franc piece for five twenty-sous pieces; and he only managed it by giving a tip of a couple of francs to the person who assisted him in this difficult monetary transaction. It seems that, for some time past, no small silver has been sent over from France; so that no metallic currency has arrived to replace that which the Jews melt in the Tribes for the fabrication of their liberally-alloyed jewelry, not to mention that which goes to the mint at Tunis, and that which the natives bury in the earth. Wholesale dealings are hampered; retail traders are like men dancing in fetters. The difficulty exists. How to get rid of it?

It is suggested by some that the best means would be to coin pieces having a nominal value considerably above their actual value; something, for instance, analogous to the money called obsidional, such as has been used during sieges. The difference being fixed by a regular tariff and known to all, everybody would be aware what he was about when taking it. It would be a currency in which confidence could be placed, although the material guarantee would only exist for a portion of the value. It would thus take rank between the bank-note, which offers the zero of material guarantee, and ordinary coin which presents the guarantee in its full integrity. The new French sous and décimes, whose intrinsic is inferior to their nominal value, are the precedent which it is proposed to follow. Money of this kind would have the inappreciable advantage of remaining in circulation; for the Jews would not be so strongly tempted to convert it into

jewelry, and the Tunisian speculators would no longer find their interest in importing it. Indigenous millionnaires (of sous) would no more bury this kind of coin than they would inter bank-notes, and trade would have always wherewithal to go on with. Such is the solution advocated by the Akhbar.

In eighteen hundred and thirty-two, a merchant of Oran, in order to remedy a like public penury, issued little cards signed with his name, to serve instead of copper coin. Before eighteen hundred and thirty, the tascaras (permits of export), little notes of three or four lines which were sealed by the Bey, circulated, and were received in the town and its environs for sums which often mounted so high as four, five, and even ten thousand francs. The present absence of change occasions an uneasiness which urgently requires a prompt remedy; and this necessity suggested to an Algiers banker the idea of issuing bons, or notes payable on demand for ten, five-and-twenty, and fifty centimes and also for one franc or a hundred centimes. The judicial authorities were of opinion that the issue was an infringement of the law of stamp duties; it is clear, however, that if private individuals are prevented from interfering at similar crises, it is the duty of the government to apply a remedy to the evil signalised.

La Colonisation (African Journal), argues that the circulation of postage-stamps, which is capable of being vulgarised and generalised for all sorts of persons and all kinds of exchanges, is preferable in every respect to card-paper tokens put forth by individuals. The small change called for is already in existence, and is serviceable the instant we decide to employ it. The figurines (a very good word, which deserves to be imported) destined to the prepayment of letters are obvious and natural small coin. The government has only to declare them coin of the realm, to make everybody have recourse to them, to render possible the many transactions in which small sums are obliged to enter, and to make it, in short, an easy matter to give change to a customer.

It is objected, in the first place, that these little square bits of paper are inconvenient to carry, and are liable to be lost; but all such matters are comparative. Figurines are twenty times more convenient than either two-sous pieces or pence, even for people unprovided with porte-monnaies. With your pockets filled with several francs'-worth of sous, it is not so very easy to run, or jump, or to make a forced march under a broiling African August sun. Some years since, the cook on board an English steamer had made considerable savings little by little. Many mickles make a muckle. He got it by pence, and in pence it remained hung up in a dark nook in a canvas bag. One voyage, in going

into port, the steamer grounded on the bar at the haven's mouth. The breakers were rough, and the cook took fright. He was a good swimmer; so he jumped into the waves to reach the shore. But he had not dreamt of leaving his beloved coppers behind. Before taking his final plunge, as it proved, he had strapped his bagful of pence and half-pence safe round his neck. Of course he went to the bottom, like a dog condemned to watery grave, and remained there till the crew had time to fish him up, after they had got themselves and the passengers out of danger, which they did. Now, if Cookey's wealth had been invested in figurines, he would have escaped with a ducking and a mouthful of brine. A glass of hot brandy and water applied to his own inside, and a little fresh gum to the back of his figurines, would have made all right and straight again.

As to the chance of being lost, figurines are just as safe as gold five-franc pieces, silver twenty-centime pieces, and copper centimes themselves. Such a consideration as that ought not to hinder a useful introduction. If you help a people to a handy representative of value, it is their business to take care of the monetary symbol; and they will be sure to do it, according as their means and position render its preservation of greater or less importance to them. Diamonds, pearls, rubies and emeralds might easily be mislaid and muddled away by persons who set no store by them; but we do not pick them up, like dropped pins, as we walk along the streets.

Timid persons are sore afraid that a small currency of French figurines, for Algerian circulation, would be the creation of assignats, or notes whose value is represented by nothing; but the objection is neither valid nor true. The government would not pay in postage-stamps, it would only be making use of them for the purposes of odd coppers. Moreover, they can instantly be converted into money's worth, namely, work done in the shape of letter-carrying to any possible amount. Figurines have no more need to be themselves of material value than have shares in canals and railways, or season-tickets to the Crystal Palace. But even with the adoption of postage-stamps as current coin, on the southern shores of the Mediterranean, an admirable opportunity still presents itself of getting rid of incongruous small coins. A small stamp, or mint-mark, like that which the English impressed on the Spanish colonati dollar, would serve to give authority and uniformity to foreign and heterogeneous metal counters. Victoria's or Napoleon's profile may penetrate into regions of Central Africa, where they will be rival idols to the long-worshipped fetishes, and will shake the altars of bloody Mumbo Jumbo himself. A continent that could swallow Europe several times over, is

furiously advertising, in urgent and even imperative placards, "Wanted, a Copper Currency!"

A SHADOW OF GEORGE HERBERT.

If thou, in life's chill thunder-rain,
 Poor heart,
 Be caught and drench'd,
 So that the fire
 Of thy so living faith all smoulder'd is and quench'd;
 Yet pause before thou dost complain,
 Dear heart, and straight inquire
 If thou
 Didst not some other while disdain
 Shelter ere now.
 But, if thou suffer'd art to bask,
 Dear heart,
 In life's full sun,
 Nor need to swerve
 From the true path of faith and duty won;
 Then look into thyself, and ask,
 True heart, if thou deserve
 Such bliss?
 If not, beware life's hardest task
 To take amiss.

A KING WHO *COULD* DO WRONG.

It had been too much the custom to look on James the First as a mere buffoon. Sir Walter Scott, with the chivalrous feeling of a cavalier, came to his rescue, and elevated him to the dignity of a pedant. He endowed him with good humour, wit, and the easy familiarity which makes monarchs and great men so popular. Then came other inquirers, and rummaged amidst the records of contemporary sycophancy, and found sermons declaring him to be a British Solomon, and dedications of learned books pronouncing him to be the best of scholars and most elegant of writers. He was evidently on the rise. Had we been mistaken all this time? and was he indeed the wise and just and accomplished prince, whom court chaplains could only parallel in the line of Hebrew kings? His leafy honours were blushing thick about him, till one day comes a frost, a biting frost. A certain laborious lawyer, by name Mr. Pitcairn, ransacks all the legal proceedings of his reign, gives transcripts of trials, the very words of the accusations, and the sentences of the jury; and the man stands confess the most bloodthirsty, greedy, and contemptible of all recorded kings. How a monster of such cruelty could be laughed at, however absurd his manner and appearance; how a mountebank so grotesque could be feared, however vindictive and tyrannical, is one of the problems which carry us back to the times of Nero, when senate and people applauded his wretched performances on the flute, and trembled at the slightest movement of his hand. It was again possible to fear and to despise at the same time.

We will cull a few examples of the mingled

meanness and ferocity which produced these incongruous results.

On the tenth of October, in the year sixteen hundred, a merchant burghess of Edinburgh was put on his trial by the king's express command. His crime had been so great, that monarchy itself was endangered by it; and the great heart of the Scottish ruler was agitated with the fate of kings.

Francis Tennant was arraigned in the following words:—"Ye are indited and accused for the false, malicious, undutiful writing and dispersing of slanderous, calumnious, and reproachful letters, to the dishonour of the king's majesty, his most noble progenitors, council, and proceedings, and stirring up of sedition and contempt in the hearts of his subjects against his majesty,—which letters ye laid down in the kirk of Edinburgh, to the effect the same might have fallen in the hands of the people; thereby to bring his majesty in contempt, and stir up his people to sedition and disobedience, expressly against the laws against lesing makers, and authors of seditious and infamous speeches and writings. Which ye cannot deny, like as ye have confest the same by two several depositions subscribed with your hand."

All the researches of the careful compiler of these trials have failed in getting a copy of the "pasquils" in which Francis Tennant had signalled his wit. From some vague entries in one of the registers, he believes they must have contained some severe innuendos on the birth of the king, calling him the son of Signor Davie, by which name Rizzio was commonly known. But whatever the satire might have been, the publication can have done no great harm, as it consisted in dropping two letters on the church floor, which seem to have been immediately picked up before they fell into the hands of the people. Francis Tennant made confession of authorship, and put himself, as it was called, in the king's will—that is, threw himself on the royal clemency, after pleading that the crime occurred three years before, and that he had not been served with a copy of the accusation. He also alluded to a noble sentence in the Roman law, which it is a pleasure to quote.

In the chapter, *Si quis Imperatori Male-dixerit*, the decision is this, "If the evil speaking proceeded from levity, it is to be despised; if from madness, it is to be pitied; if from a sense of wrong, it is to be forgiven." But whether in this case it proceeded from levity, or madness, or a sense of wrong, the king was determined on his revenge. He wrote a warrant to the court to pronounce doom on Francis Tennant. Read the bitter words and remember the offence. "Justice, Justice-clerk, and your Deputes. We greet you well. It is our will, and we command you, that upon the sight hereof ye pronounce

the doom following upon Francis Tennant, burghess of Edinburgh, after his conviction of the forging and casting down of seditious pasquils—that is to say, That he shall be taken to the market-cross of Edinburgh, and his tongue cut out at the root; and that there shall be a paper fixed upon his brow bearing that he is convicted for forging and giving out of certain vile and seditious pasquils detracting us and our most noble progenitors; and thereafter that he be taken to the gallows and hanged till he be dead, as ye will answer to us upon your offices and obedience. Whereanent these presents shall be your warrant."

This was dated the twenty-third of September. In three or four days, calmer and softer thoughts came into the king's mind. He reflected, probably, on the length of time which had occurred since the pasquinade was written, or the sufferings of the poor author during his long imprisonment; and—generous, noble James!—he writes on the twenty-seventh to his subservient judges "that they are to omit the tongue-cutting, and merely hang the culprit—escheating his goods to the crown." Ay, here is the moving power in all the interferences of this exemplary sovereign with the course of justice. Mr. Pitcairn, who defends the king's character wherever he can, gives him up here. "Independently of his wounded kingly dignity," he says, "the wealthy burghess's *escheat* had proved too great a bait to James's cupidity to admit of his passing scot-free."

What the arena, with the excitement of its gladiatorial combats, was to the Roman emperors, the courts of law were to the son of Signor Davie. He seems to have watched them with the keen interest with which Caligula may have observed the struggles of a Christian martyr in the grasp of a tiger. He was perpetually in a fidget till he got his victim condemned. His judges were removable at pleasure, and not displeased with the taste of blood. So king and lawyer were mutually pleased.

One day—it was the twenty-third of April, sixteen hundred and one—there was excellent sport provided for the Lord's anointed, as he called himself, and the dispensers of justice in the Parliament house. The blood of Francis Tennant was still dripping from his hands, when his wrath was roused by a much greater enormity than the mere publication of a pasquil; an enormity so great, that nothing but the doer's death could expiate the offence. The offence, to be sure, was unpremeditated. It was not even carried into execution; but the man had shewed an intention of committing the crime—he would have completed the dreadful act if he had not been prevented—and that was enough.

Archibald Cornwall was one of the town officers of Edinburgh. His duties seem to

have resembled those of a bailiff at the present time. Some unfortunate tenant had fallen into arrears for rent, and the relentless hand of the law had seized this man's goods—chairs, benches, tables, bed, and, unfortunately for poor Cornwall (who was perhaps no great judge of the fine arts) a "portraiture" of the king. Let us hope it was hideously like, and did justice to the truculent insignificance of expression of the great original. While the worthy official was preparing to dispose of the goods by auction at the market cross, it struck him that if this splendid specimen of painting could be seen by the crowd assembled, he might have a chance of getting a few extra shillings when its turn came to be sold. He therefore got a hammer and a nail, and was in the act of going towards a certain tall, dark, dismal-looking beam which stood close to the rostrum he occupied, for the purpose of hanging the representation of majesty high enough to be viewed by all. What was this tall upright beam, with the projecting arm and the remains of a piece of cord dangling from it in the air? Some friends stopped the auctioneer from making use of the fatal tree. The hammer was put back in its place—the nail left innocuous in the wood. What! is James to be disappointed of his vengeance? Is he to have no blood? Listen to the "dittay," or accusation:—

"The which day Archibald Cornwall, one of the town officers of Edinburgh, being entered on pannel, dilated, accused, and pursued for the reasonable and ignominious dishonouring and defaming, so far as in him lay, of our sovereign lord, the King's majesty, by taking of his Highness's portraiture to the public market-place of this burgh, and there shamefully and vilely setting the same to the stoops and upbearers of the gibbet; and in more, and manifest, and treasonable contempt and disdain of his majesty, he stood up upon a board or form beside the said gibbet, and drove a nail therein, so high as he could reach it, and lifted up his Highness's portraiture aforesaid, and held the same upon the gibbet, pressing (intending) to have hung the same thereon, and to have left it there as an ignominious spectacle to the whole world, if he had not been staid by the indignation of the whole people, menacing to stone him to death, and pulling him perforce from the said gibbet, to stay his treasonable fact as aforesaid."

The jury found the unfortunate man "guilty of setting his Majesty's portrait to the tram or beam of the gibbet, and presenting of the same to be hung high upon a nail infixed in the said gibbet." And then comes the sentence which sent James rejoicing home: "For the which cause the said Justice Depute, by the dempster of the said court, decerned and ordained the said Archibald Cornwall to forfeit life, lands, and goods (Oho! he was a wealthy man, this bailiff!) and to be

taken to the said gibbet, whereupon he intended to hang his Majesty's portrait, and thereon to be hanged till he be dead, and to hang thereupon by the space of twenty-four hours with a paper on his forehead containing that vile crime committed by him."

The careful editor of these curious trials informs us, that James took a deep and active part in the death of this poor man; and that on all occasions the slightest infraction on his personal dignity was never forgiven. Nay, we find as he advanced in years he extended his guardianship of his individual honour to that of his native land. Touch a Scotchman, you had the king for your enemy; and at that time, when all the scum and outpouring of the north forced its way into every cranny and corner of England, his majesty had quite enough to do to restrain the reproaches and sneers, and animosities of his new and less obedient subjects. It was with difficulty the Scotch of all ranks and degrees could be protected from personal violence. They were mobbed in theatres, and lampooned in prose and verse. But woe to the lampooner if he were discovered. There was a bloated jester in Whitehall, with a broad Scotch brogue, with the vanity of a woman and the malevolence of a coward, who resented any depreciatory allusions to his ancient kingdom as insults to himself and attacks on his sovereign power. There appeared one day in the streets of Edinburgh a Polish gentleman of the name of Stercoff (Latinised into Stercovius). He travelled in his national garb, as he had probably done in the other enlightened capitals of Europe; but the Scottish people, with an instinctive persuasion that nobody could visit their cold and inhospitable land without some sinister object, insulted the foreigner wherever he appeared. They hooted him on account of his dress, and of course despised him because he spoke with a foreign accent, and perhaps because he occasionally washed his hands. At all events, they made the man's visit very disagreeable. He revenged himself by the publication of a pamphlet called a *Legend of Reproaches*; and, in it, expressed some very free opinions as to the politeness, the kindness, the civilisation of the Scottish nation. The king read the book; and, from that hour, the fate of Stercovius was sealed. He had left the country; he was quietly living at home. But he had a king for his enemy, and nothing could save him. An ambassador was sent over to demand his life: money was lavished to bribe compliance: the claimant was King of England. The culprit's native state was anxious to stand well with the successor of Elizabeth; and Stercovius was arrested and hanged! The persecution of this poor man cost his Majesty upwards of six hundred pounds—a great sum in those days—but revenge was sweet; and, if it could be had for nothing, sweeter still. So he applied to the

Scotch burghs for the repayment of the coin expended in vindicating the Scottish honour. We looked carefully for the result of this application, and we turned over the page with some misgivings. We read, and rejoiced greatly that the applicant was foiled. The burghs declared it a national question beyond their jurisdiction, and Stercovius's ghost may perhaps have been soothed by the agonies of grief with which the murderer parted with the "siller." But what? If foreigners are thus punished for aspersing the countrymen of the king, shall one of the Scots themselves turn traitor to the cause of Scottish honour, and revile his auld respected mother, and live? No, no. Call Thomas Ross into court.

Mr. Thomas Ross has been a minister in the Scotch kirk, but has gone to study at Oxford preparatory to being episcopally ordained: a flighty, light-headed man, who has been sometimes in custody of his friends as not quite in his right mind. They should have kept him from pen ink and paper; for one day—in his new-found zeal for the English form of Church government, and persuaded, with the absurd vanity common to the half-witted, that his talents would amply redeem any little wrong his enmity might do to his countrymen, and that even the king would be pleased with so witty, so deep, so learned an adversary—he affixed on the great door of Saint Mary's, in the High Street, a thesis, as was the custom in those days, containing most dreadful propositions, as we shall afterwards see. The Vice-Chancellor, if he had been a sensible man, would have laughed at them and said no more. But he was probably in hopes of a bishopric, being a toady of the largest size. He accordingly sent up the awful paper to Whitehall. The king rubbed his hands; there was another unhappy man to be punished. He sent down to Oxford; he hired a vessel at London Bridge; he sent the much-bewildered author of the thesis down to Edinburgh, with a letter to the judges to condemn him as soon as they could, and keep him in the iron cage in the meantime. He was too valuable a bird to be allowed to escape. Poor, silly, vain, ridiculous Mr. Thomas! Why didn't you stay quietly in your small manse at Cargill, and not mix yourself up in the great questions of Church and State? For this is your indictment:—

"Ye are dilated of the devilish and detestable forging, feigning, and blasphemous uttering, and by writ publicly exposing of a villanous, infamous, and devilish writ, all written with your own hand, concerning a pasquil, or thesis; together with ten several abominable articles, or appendices, confirming the same; that all Scotsmen ought to be thrust forth of the court of England (excepting his gracious Majesty and his son, and a very few others); and that the Englishmen are

mightily blinded and deceived (although quick-sighted otherwise), that they should suffer such an unprofitable and pernicious multitude, and filthy offscourings of people, to rage and domineer within their entrails and bowels, &c. &c."

What could Thomas say? He grinned a foolish grin or two, we may suppose, and confessed his crime: said he was in one of his fits of insanity at the time—inops mentis, the Oxford scholar called it—and that he was very sorry for what he had done. Most people would have been satisfied with this excuse. But the king—let us see what conduct he pursued. The half "daft" prisoner is, of course, found guilty in terms of his own confession; under what threats or promises obtained, the record sayeth not; and sent back to his miserable prison till his Majesty's pleasure could be known. His Majesty's pleasure was soon too widely known by means of the following sentence:

"September 10, 1618. The Justice, conform to a warrant and director of his Majesty, by the mouth of the dempster of court, ordained the said Maister Thomas to be taken to the market-cross of Edinburgh, and there upon a scaffold, first his right hand to be struck off, and thereafter his head to be struck from his body; and his head to be thereafter affixed on an iron spike upon the Nether-Bow Port; and his said right hand to be also affixed on the West Port of the said burgh of Edinburgh; and his whole moveable goods and gear (if any he has) to be escheat to his Majesty's use, as convict and culpable of the said heinous crime."

The letter of the king is still extant, though the lord advocate of the time, willing enough to be the instrument of the cruelty, made great efforts to have the record of the whole transaction expunged from the Books of Session. But a careful picker-up of remarkable incidents at the time took duplicates of all the proceedings, and in an obscure corner of the library of the Faculty was discovered a manuscript containing everything; the blood-thirsty instructions of the king, the words of the accusation, and, most curious of all, the very Thesis, with all its ten propositions which the insane Scotchman fixed up upon St. Mary's door. That noble church in the noblest of streets, with thousands of the youth of England pouring into it when the bell rings on Sunday morning, are there any who look upon the solemn gateway and remember that an awful tragedy took its beginning on that spot? A single student saw the paper, and tore it down; he carried it to the vice-chancellor before another eye than his own had time to rest on the madly scribbled document; and Thomas Ross died a death of great suffering. His family were disgraced and ruined; the king's frown was upon the house of Craigy of which, he was a son; and brothers, sisters, all, went into

beggary. There is a record in the church books of their native parish of various payments of small sums for the maintenance of "Mr. Ross, late of Craigy, brother of Maister Thomas, late execute in Edinburgh."

But these criminal trials are not all of such a melancholy character as those we have selected as illustrations of the inherent cruelty of King James's nature. Some of them are ludicrous—but it is only the laughable side of a thoroughly hateful disposition, for in all of them we find traces, wherever the chief actor appears, of a meanness, a vanity, and a paltry cunning, which make us turn almost for consolation to the gloomier pages we have left. It is better to be torn by a tiger than mangled and worried, with ridiculous contortions, by a ferocious baboon. Here is a delightful story, under date of January the thirteenth, sixteen hundred and one.

There was a young widow, buxom and free, of the name of Isabel Hutchinson, who was living, a rich and honoured guest, with John Johnstone, baillie of the small village near Edinburgh called the Water of Leith. At kirk and market the widow was much admired; her fortune was probably well known, and it was all in her own power. Now, about four miles from the Water of Leith was the mansion of Craighouse, belonging to the Kincaids, and, of course, it was not long before the rumour of the widow's charms, personal and pecuniary, reached the somewhat impoverished laird. On went his best boots, out came his best horse, and, with sword and spurs to show his gentle blood, he cantered gaily over to the Water of Leith, and called on his friend the bailliff.

John Kincaid of Craighouse was of higher rank than the lady; but love and money level all distinctions of this sort. To be Laddy Kincaid of Craighouse, with immense expanses of the Braid Hills as part of her domain—compensating by quantity of acres for poverty of soil—was a great elevation to the wealthy widow Hutchinson. So there is every reason to suppose that the laird prospered in his wooing. Day after day he mounted his fine brown horse—it was one of the best trotters in the county—and he trotted, full of blissful anticipations, to the residence of the lady of his love. But a hitch arose somewhere; whether the relations of the defunct Hutchinson did not like the match, or the widow was not yet out of the guardianship of mother and aunts, no one can tell; but it struck John Kincaid one day as he travelled to the Water of Leith on his noble brown, that its back was long enough for two; and that if by any chance he could get the widow behind him, they would need fleet steeds to catch them before they got into the stout walls of Craighouse. Then he would send for "Mess John," have the indissoluble knot tied, and snap their fingers at the

deceased George Hutchinson and all his kin. Wicked John Kincaid to imagine such a device! But in those days it was far from uncommon, and was scarcely counted a misdemeanour, especially if the other party made no objection to the ride. The baillie of the Water of Leith appears to have been a gentleman that knew the world. He could wink when duty or friendship called for it; and, on extraordinary occasions, could shut his eyes altogether. On the seventeenth of December, sixteen hundred, accordingly, John Kincaid left his mansion of Craighouse; and, attended for honour and safe escort by six or seven friends and followers—among whom we are pleased to see the name of David Watson, sister's son (nephew) of John Johnstone, baillie of the Water of Leith—proceeded to the house where the lady was, no doubt, waiting his arrival. But modesty is great in widows about to be married again, and it took some time, and perhaps a little gentle assistance, to get her into the saddle. Can there have been treason in the camp? Has anybody told the king what game was afoot? or was it chance and misadventure altogether? It so happened that his majesty was hunting that day in the fields that lay between the Water of Leith and Braid. A cavalcade such as the elopement presented was not likely to escape the crowned Paul Pry; who besides had, in all likelihood, been forewarned of what was going on. The bridal party turned off to one side, galloped night and main to get out of view; and, skulking through valleys and getting behind rocks, they reached the house, dismounted the terrified bride, helped her into the hall, and barred the great door. Is that all you knew of the king, John Kincaid? Don't you know that he is defender of the law, and allows no man to tyrannise over the subject but himself? Where is the marriage license? Where are the banns? Is the widow your wife?

Suddenly a great knock shakes the door of Craighouse, a face pale with anticipation of evil is presented at the side window of the flanking tower, and the bridegroom sees half a dozen lords, and knights, and gentlemen, who demand admission in the king's name, to arrest him for the high crime of forcible abduction, one of the highest offences known to the law. The main door of Craighouse was of stout oak, and the walls six feet thick. The widow was very beautiful (and also rich), and John Kincaid declined to admit the Earl of Mar, Sir John Ramsay, and divers others, who clamour greatly for the release of Mistress Hutchinson out of her involuntary duresse. The contest lasts some time, till the assailants threaten to bring the king himself to the rescue, and set fire to the house. The heart of the laird sinks at this, and he opens the door. He is instantly seized as a wrong-doer, hurried into Edinburgh, and treated in prison with such rigorous harshness, and scantiness of food, and dampness of

dungeon, that he is compelled by hunger and request of friends to throw himself upon the king's will. This was exactly what his majesty wished, and had set all this machinery in motion to obtain. He avoided by the confession of the culprit, the chances of an acquittal, and the exposure of an open trial; and this was the legal document by which the king decided the affair.

"James, by the Grace of God King of Scots. To our justice, justice-clerk, and their deputies greeting. For as much as John Kincaid of Craighouse is become in our will for the abducting of Izabel Hutchinson, widow; therefore we declare our will as follows, to wit; that the said John Kincaid shall make payment to us and our treasurer in our name, or to such others as our said treasurer shall appoint and assign, of the sum of two thousand five hundred marks, money of our realm; as also that he shall deliver to us, and our said treasurer, his brown horse; commanding hereby, you our said justice, justice-clerk, and deputies to cause, pronounce, and declare this our will against the said John, judicially; and insert these presents in our books of adjournal to have the strength of an act or decree. Subscribed with our hand at Holyrood-house, the last day of January, 1601 years.

JAMES REX.

What became of John Kincaid and the winsome widow, we do not know. Let us hope that the marriage was brought to pass in a legal manner, and that part of her fortune went to pay the enormous fine. May we hope, also, that an extra fifty pounds recovered the good brown horse?

These are but samples of the appearances the King of Scots makes in his character of Head of the Law. The mingled cruelty and selfishness he displayed were never equalled by any other ruler. Whether it was to murder a crazy minister, as in the case of Ross, or to make himself master of a good steed, as in the case of Kincaid, the restless interference of the British Solomon is always visible, and the laws tortured to his purpose. The subserviency of judge and jury, the base adulation of the courtiers, the oppression of the people, and the bloated self-sufficiency of the monarch, might remind us of a certain crowned head of the present time. But the skies of Scotland would need to be darkly, beautifully blue, the Forth with its Inch-Keith and Inch-Colm to be a sapphire sea studded with emerald isles, to make the parallel complete. Yet, will some future generation—Heaven send it may be the present!—shudder over the triumphs of King Bomba and the sufferings of Poerio, as we in this happier time look back with loathing and pity on the blood-stained annals of King James.

We cannot close these extracts from a very valuable work, without entering a protest against the attempts sometimes made to gild over the infamies of the unfortunate reign of King James the First. We suspect even, that those who study Mr. Pitcairn's volumes will cease to be either amused or

misled by the bonhommie and kindly humours of the monarch in the Fortunes of Nigel.

COMMON COOKERY.

It has been too long an English fashion to despise cookery: not the pleasure of good living, but the art of making good food out of unpromising material—of rendering the less tempting and the less nutritious parts of meat, palatable and nourishing by scientific treatment. We have even embodied our contempt in certain popular sneers at the kitchen world of some of our neighbours; whose economy seems to us mean rather than ingenious, and whose culinary contrivances we suspect to be unwholesome, instead of admiring as infinitely better than our own. Yet few blessings are of greater importance than that of well feeding a dense population; and if, by any application of unused material, or by new combinations of those already in use, the sum of a nation's food can be increased, a larger national benefit will have been wrought than many would like to acknowledge. We know that a vast amount of evil temper, and irritability, arises from indigestion, and that indigestion is greatly helped, if not caused, by bad cooking.

But the greatest impediment to a culinary reformation exists among the people themselves. The prejudices of the poor are so extraordinary that it has always been a matter of great difficulty to coax them into the use of any new article of food. In the time of the famine in Ireland, starving men refused to eat Indian meal, and the beggars of Munich during Count Romford's great soup experiment there, would have nothing to do with a certain diabolical root, then lately imported into Bavaria: potatoes were obliged to be disguised out of all shape, mashed and mixed, and fairly smuggled down their innocent throats. But, when they afterwards learnt what new ingredient had so astonishingly improved their daily soup, they had the wisdom to clamour for more potatoes. Again, in Ireland no one will eat bullock's liver. And, when men and women were dying under the hedges of bare hunger, large casks of salted bullock's liver were sent from Ireland to England to be pressed (the pressing yielding a liquor in great request for certain adulterations), dried in ovens, pounded, and sent back to Ireland as snuff. How few, too, of our own poor will eat rye-bread! In Ireland, it is a social disgrace to eat rye-bread. Who does not know also the pestilence of fish manure—fish manure for potato land? which means gold and life scattered broadcast to putrify in the air. Hundreds pining in want and hunger, might live well and healthfully on that neglected manure, if they would but learn the simple art of cooking fish-food properly; so as to make the most out

of everything. Many other materials of food are also cast aside altogether, or comparatively but very little used. Thus macaroni, of which a pound at fivepence gives four pounds of food when boiled, is almost unknown among our poor. Yet, seasoned with pepper and salt, and flavoured with grated cheese (which the poor can buy very cheap) or sweetened with sugar and butter, it makes a dish not to be despised, even by epicures. Indian meal, also, mixed with treacle and boiled hard as a pudding, is a delicious dish; as also when made into a kind of porridge or stirabout, and then eaten with butter and sugar, or treacle, or with red herrings and fine herbs, if it is to be made very good. These are modes of preparation in high repute in America; but here, although Indian meal is cheap and plentiful—and were there the demand, it would be more plentiful still—we doubt if the poorest person in the kingdom would touch them.

We laugh at the old Pythagorean prejudice which thought it a crime to eat eggs; because an egg was a microcosm, or universe in little: the shell being the earth; the white, water; fire, the yolk; and the air found between the shell and the white. But we are positively no more rational, if less religious, in many of our eating superstitions. The Chinese are the only people who make use of everything that can by any possibility be masticated and digested. They understand cookery better than any other people in the world. Their disguises and transformations are very clever. For instance, they make real cheese out of dried peas—the whole tribe of leguminosæ yield vegetable caseine, or cheese—not to speak of their edible birds'-nests, their strings of savoury slugs and caterpillars, their plump puppies, and kittens innocent of mouse-flesh, daily sold in their streets. Every herb of the field, the Chinese press into the service of their stewing-pans. They eat foxes in Italy, where they are sold very dear, and thought fit for the table of a cardinal.

But the grand article of all whose claims we wish most to press, and whose claims we English most neglect, is soup. A man might really grow quite eloquent on the wonderful properties of soup. It is nourishing, even when made of vegetables only—of course more nourishing when made of meat. It distends the stomach, which is as necessary for digestion as nourishment itself. Those same 'bullocks' livers we were speaking about make capital soup; so do coarse joints, usually sold at very low prices; and ox-cheeks, which are generally from twopence-halfpenny to threepence the pound; as well as other odds and ends of the butcher's stall. And here let us give the primary law of all soups. They must be made with cold water, suffered to boil only for a few minutes, and then kept at almost the boiling point—simmering, in fact—for many hours. The secret is to make them of

cold water, and let them simmer gently for a long time. The theory is this. Hot water sets the albuminous constituents of meat hard, as the white of egg is set, and prevents the juices from escaping; but cold water softens the fibres, and extracts the albumen and the nourishing juices. But for boiled meat, the reverse. The meat should be put into boiling water to set the juices; and then kept under the boiling point, (which is two hundred and twelve degrees,) until quite cooked. To continue it at a boil hardens and spoils it. Finely chopped meat put into cold water gradually warmed, then strained and pressed, makes the best soup for invalids. Bacon, dried beef, red herrings, suet dumplings, and fish of all kinds, make good soups, as well as rice, sago, semolina, and other grain. Peas and barley, with slices of wheaten bread, make a strong and nourishing soup, well seasoned with fine herbs, pepper, and salt. Count Romford fed his beggars on this at Munich, at the cost of two and a half farthings a day! This, including the expense of firewood and wages, and at a time, when firewood was much dearer than coal is now in England. By his own contrivances (we use the Romford stove to this day), he reduced the daily cost of fuel for the dinners of a thousand, and twelve, sometimes fifteen hundred people, to four-pence halfpenny a day. This could be done again. Without dreaming of interfering with the domestic meal—the snug family circle, which has such a good moral effect—and recommending, instead, communistic feeding, we would simply suggest that cooking on a large scale might be advantageous and economical to the people. In model lodging-houses, for example, certain standard dishes—soup the principal—might be made wholesale at much less cost to each family, than if made separately in the family rooms. Public cooking would require skilful handling, like all things affecting the internal conditions of domestic life; but certainly it would be much cheaper than the present mode of separate cooking, and it might well be so managed as not to interfere with the most private manner of living.

Volumes might be written on soup. The orator, the physiologist, the philanthropist, or even the poet, might advantageously expend his genius on the subject of soup. "No one estimates its value," says Liebig, "more highly than the hospital physician, for whose patients soup, as a means of restoring the exhausted strength, cannot be replaced by any other article in the pharmacopœia. Its vivifying and restoring action on the appetite, on the digestive organs, the colour, and the general appearance of the sick, is most striking." Extract of meat, or concentrated soup, is thus spoken of by Parmentier, and is especially applicable to our brethren in the Crimea; whose ignorance of cooking brought

starvation upon thousands of themselves last winter: "In the supplies of a body of troops, extract of meat would offer to the severely wounded soldier a means of invigoration which, with a little wine, would instantly restore his powers, exhausted by great loss of blood, and admit of his removal to the nearest field-hospital." "What more invigorating remedy," exclaims Proust, another experienced dietetic physiologist, "what more powerfully acting panacea than a portion of genuine extract of meat, dissolved in a glass of noble wine? The most *recherché* delicacies of gastronomy are all for the spoiled children of wealth. Ought we then to have nothing in our field-hospitals for the unfortunate soldier, whose fate condemns him to suffer for our benefit the horrors of the long death-struggle, amidst snow, and mud, and swamps?"

In this prejudiced country, the idea connected with soup is, that it is a poor, washy, meagre sort of food, not at all worthy of the true-born Briton. But this idea is erroneous, even when applied to soup made without meat and entirely of vegetables. Upon such soup, millions of people on the Continent almost entirely exist. It is true they are not so muscular as people who have access to meat, because vegetables, producing in the human body chiefly blood and flesh, yield muscle sparingly. Neither do the herbs of the field furnish the weakly nutriment that most of our beef-loving countrymen imagine. The horse is not a weakling, neither is the elephant; yet both are strict vegetarians. Nature makes them so; but she has given to man a dentition and a stomach for flesh; and flesh he had better have—when he can get it. But, because man *can* do without it, he is a bad reasoner who reduces himself to the condition of a joyless vegetarian. Vegetables do not offer sufficient resistance to the incisors and canines of man for perfectly healthy existence. So thoroughly is mastication a law of nature, that Count Romford's mendicants pined upon copious rations of excellent soup, until the Count discovered that Nature resented the idleness of their teeth. He added to each portion crusty bread toasted hard, and his paupers became plump.

Meat soup is, of course, better than soup maigre; but soup maigre is better than starvation. And we venture to assert that starvation is the lot of thousands in this country, in consequence of a stolid prejudice against utilising all sorts of leguminous, and even of adipose matter, by making soup of it.

We might save almost as much in our cooking as Count Romford saved in his, both of food and fuel, if we were wiser in our methods. If we always cooked in close vessels, and never opened the lid—whereby a large volume (seven-eighths) of absolute nutriment escapes up the chimney; if we

cooked with slow fires, letting things simmer rather than boil, and if we roasted slowly and thoroughly. Or if, with a hot fire at first, then suffering the heat to diminish gradually—which makes the meat become aromatic and tender—remembering, too, to preserve the fat, by covering it with paper, as joints of venison are covered; above all, if we made use of every known article of food, we should save one third of our present expenditure, and have more food and more pleasure into the bargain. As soon as one day's dinner of stew or soup is ended, the pan might be wiped out clean, and the next day's meat or "stock" set to simmer on the hob or in the oven. Housewives who do not know that secret would be surprised to find how much good they would get from it. Thirty-six legs of mutton, weighing two hundred and eighty-eight pounds, were once cooked for one shilling and two-pence in a gas stove. And this economy was not due only to the material of fuel, but to the manner of cooking. We cannot repeat it too often—small fires and close stoves are what we want; not yawning caverns of flame, with all the heat and half the nutriment roaring up the chimney; but little holes, as in France, where a few bits of charcoal cook, with patience, such delicious stews and soups and ragoûts as all our tons of coals and gallons of galloping water never can accomplish. Look at our *gridirons*! First, we must have a clear fire,—only to be got at by a vast expenditure of fuel and quantities of salt; and when made, for what? For all the fat to drip wasting on the coals, doing no good to any one,—for so much waste, in fact.

There is a wide field for economy, too, in bread. Brown bread is used in the houses of the rich as a luxury,—the poor will not touch it. Yet unsifted wheaten flour is infinitely the best as an article of food. Liebig says that bolted flour is a "matter of luxury, and injurious rather than beneficial as regards the nutritive power of bread." And as the mass of bread is increased one-fifth by being unbolted, there is surely an additional reason why the poor should use it. The finest American flour is perhaps the best in point of nutritive quality; but then it is more expensive than unbolted flour, which stands next to meat. Except the juice of meat, says Liebig, nothing is so near the fibrine of flesh as the gluten of wheat. Many thousand hundred-weights of the finest and purest flour in England are turned into starch, to dress cotton goods with; and the gluten, which is the refuse of this manufacture, amounting to twelve or twenty per cent. of the dried flour, is lost as food for man. Its nutritive power may be estimated when we know that in an experiment made by the Academicians in France, dogs were fed for ninety days exclusively on the gluten of wheat, devoured raw, and at the end of the time they were sleek, healthy, and in perfectly good condition.

In an experiment made by Magendie, a dog fed exclusively on fine wheaten bread died after forty days; another dog, fed on brown bread (made with the bran), "lived on without any disturbance of his health." Boiled with salt and water, dried, and ground to a coarse meal, gluten is then easily preserved, and makes, when mixed with abstract of meat and kitchen vegetables, the strongest and best-flavoured soup known. Lime-water makes bread white. It does all that alum and phosphate of copper do, without being injurious as the one and poisonous as the other. Bread "doctored" in this manner, as most London bread is doctored, becomes positively hurtful, instead of nutritious,—its chemical properties being completely altered by alum, and actual poison being introduced by phosphate of copper. Oatmeal and rye are both very little used in the south of England, and even in the north are gradually passing out of fashion. More's the pity! For porridge is not a thing to be rejected unwarily, if made well; and rye bread is much more delicious than the uninitiated would believe. Both kinds of grain are cheap too,—which is perhaps one cause of their unpopularity in our luxurious England.

We make little use of fish—partly because we don't know how to prepare it. We know only how to fry and boil. To stew or bake, or make into soup, we have very little idea of. The same law holds good with respect to cut and crimped fish as with meat for boiling and for stews. It ought to be boiled in hot water, so as to set the gelatine and gluten it contains; but if the skir is uncut, then it must be boiled in cold water, and always with a little salt. Fish baked in a deep dish, with savoury herbs and oil or butter (seasoning, of course, included), makes a capital dish. Any small fry will do,—sprats and such like, not generally of great repute among the people; but we think injuriously slighted. Fried fish should be managed with great care. The fat in the fryingpan should be kept at boiling heat, which prevents any fishy flavour from escaping; and therefore, as M. Soyer says, in the same fat in which we have fried a sole you may fry an apple fritter, if you are careful not to allow the fat to cool. Fish mashed up with potatoes—the left potatoes of yesterday—fish and rice, fish boiled in soup, all these are excellent varieties of cooking fish,—too much neglected by the poor; but if learnt and attended to, would increase their food and their enjoyment to an infinite degree.

One of the saddest things to think of, in a country where men are sometimes all but starving for want of food, is the waste of meat in some nations: Australia, for instance, Buenos Ayres, and Mexico, where beef and mutton are melted down for tallow, and only the prime joints used at all. What paradises these seem to us, in a country where meat ranges from sixpence to tenpence the pound!

If the manufacture of extract of meat was heartily carried out in these lands of beeves and oxen, what a saving it would be to humanity at large. Here in Europe it is found too expensive to be popular. Near Giessen, in Germany, where there is a large manufactory, it is from six shillings to seven and sixpence the pound, which price puts it out of the reach of many most requiring it; as, for example, in hospitals and public charities. In a battle-field, as we have seen, a little extract of meat dissolved in a glass of wine would be of more service to the wounded men than we can conceive—giving them strength to be transported to the rear; which very often, for want of a timely stimulus, is impossible. Soup-tablets fell into disrepute owing to the ignorance of the manufacturers. They, seeing that all strong soups and stocks gelatinised or formed into a jelly, imagined that gelatine was the chief constituent of good soup. And when they found that white meat, tendons, feet, cartilage, bones, ivory, and hartshorn, yielded the most beautiful and most transparent jelly-tablets, which were cheaply obtained and sold at a high price, ignorance and the love of gain exchanged the valuable constituents of flesh for gelatine, only to be distinguished from common joiner's glue by its high price. No wonder, then, if the soup-tablets fell in public estimation. Prepared scientifically, from juicy meat—prepared so as to be sold no higher than three shillings a pound—this sort of portable soup would be both invaluable to mankind as a discovery and profitable to the manufacturer. Solidified milk is also a recent discovery, and an invaluable one; and in preserved fruits and vegetables—with lime juice—we may foresee the time when there shall be no more scurvy on board ship.

One of the largest promises of science is, that the sum of human happiness will be increased, ignorance destroyed, and, with ignorance, prejudice and superstition, and that great truth taught to all, that this world and all it contains were meant for our use and service; and that where nature by her own laws has defined the limits of original unfitness, science may by extract so modify those limits as to render wholesome that which by natural wildness was hurtful, and nutritious that which by natural poverty was un nourishing. We do not yet know half that chemistry may do by way of increasing our food. Sawdust bread may seem a very mythic kind of diet, and acorns may be held fitter for the pig-trough than the dining table: but in time science will have reconciled greater anomalies than even these, and have opened almost as wide a natural larder as the whole of nature herself. Who, on the mere surface of things, would have dreamed of beetroot containing sugar? And who would now believe that in the famine of sixteen hundred and thirty, good white, nutritious, and

lasting bread was made out of turnips, kneaded up with an equal weight of flour? Turnip-bread! The words seem rather unpractical; yet we ourselves know of bread that was produced last year in Paris—white, firm, sweet, and wholesome—in which the inventor solemnly declared there was not a single grain of flour. He wished the government to buy his secret, or he had already taken out a patent, we forget which; but he produced the bread, and our friends eat it. It was sold at four sous the four-pound loaf. Wheaten bread was then very dear, much to the dissatisfaction of the ouvriers round the barrières, more than one of whom declared that the emperor was a polisson and a gredin, and predicted a revolution in consequence. Not that the emperor had much to do with it, excepting in the perpetual State and police interference with the markets, which yet were always kept as low as possible for the consumer, to the damage of the producer very often. However, more than one émeute of which the world never knew was the result of this dearth of bread. Yet people would have to be coaxed and hoodwinked into buying nutritious bread, not made of wheaten flour, at a halfpenny a pound. And doubtless many of the ignorant would believe that government—that vague term—had some sinister design on hand, and that they were to be poisoned off easy, if this cheap food had been pressed on them. This is the universal consequence of ignorance, fear and distrust of every new advantage.

On the whole, then, the sum of this paper is contained in the following rules. Make use of every material possible for food—remembering that there are chemical affinities and properties by which nutriment may be extracted from almost every organic substance, the greatest art being in proper cooking. Make soup of every kind of flesh, fish, farina, and leguminosæ. Everything adds to its strength and flavour. Bones, fish, stale bread, vegetables, nettle-tops, turnip-tops, and water-cresses growing for the gathering, dandelion bleached, and other wild herbs and weeds—all will turn to account in a skilful housewife's hands, more especially in soup. And remember that even pure vegetable soup, accompanied with bread fried in fat, is the best article of food to be had after solid flesh or meat soup; and that you can make this dish nourishing and savoury out of the material you could not otherwise eat. Cook your food in close vessels; and, when possible, in close stoves. Cook slowly and thoroughly, and abjure, as wasteful and baneful, those fierce caverns of flames, which simply heat the chimney—which does not do much good, excepting sometimes to the fire-engines; and which spends your substance in creating smoke; a disagreeable substance to create, to say the least of it, and a bad investment for your money. Make stews slowly. Make soup with cold water, increasing the heat

gradually. Cook boiled meat by plunging it into boiling water, then let the heat decrease, and simmer it till ready.

MILITARY FANS.

COLONEL TEVIS, late a staff-officer in the Turkish service, and a pupil of the military college of the United States, has endeavoured to remove the military ignorance of the non-professional world. Speaking from long and useful experience, at Kars and elsewhere, the colonel has contrived to make the movements of an army intelligible to the non-military reader. He has used the French language for the conveyance of his knowledge; probably because his admiration is wholly concentrated upon the military system of our allies. Can Sandhurst be compared with St. Cyr? Can the knowledge of Ensign Fiddles be mentioned beside that of Sou-lieutenant Bontemps? Are there any cavalry colonels in the French army who cannot take their regiment out of the barrack-yard? Questions of this nature probably struck Colonel Tevis as he sat down to tell the world how armies are protected from sudden assaults on the march; how the baggage is guarded; how way-worn warriors are left to rest peacefully with their martial cloaks around them.

It is the business of an army in the field to keep the enemy as ignorant as possible of its position, its strength, and its destination; therefore it surrounds itself with a web as dangerous to hostile adventurers as the spider's web is to the fly. On all sides, scouts scour the country in quest of the foe; and, when they discover him, pass the word back till it reaches head-quarters. Cavalry gallop round the woods; fantassins climb the ridges in pairs, and look carefully about long before the first column of the main army approaches. Then, should the enemy suddenly appear to these scouts in force, they fall slowly back, warning the advanced guard. The army is yet some way behind, and will have ample time to prepare for a meeting while the advanced guard holds the enemy in check. The advanced guard is generally composed of troops of all arms, and varies in strength from one-third to one-fifth of the main army, according to the ground over which its advanced posts extend along the front and flanks; according, also, to the resistance it is needful to offer to the enemy. In a country the surface of which demands numerous advanced posts and in which the advanced guard is compelled to put out half its strength in the posts, the strength of this body is generally increased; but, in a small army of two or three thousand men, no more than one-fifth of its entire strength can be detached as an advanced guard. The great business of this advanced force, besides protecting the army from sudden attack, is to prevent the enemy from reconnoitering. This latter service may

make it necessary for the guard to act on the offensive, in order to mislead the enemy as to the strength of the army opposed to him; but its usual attitude is the defensive. Even here, when the outposts are attacked, they should fall back as slowly as possible, upon the main body of the advanced guard—the guard also retiring slowly, in order to give the main body full time to prepare to strike the decisive blow. It is most important that the advanced guard should take up its position along a line of ground from which it can observe the enemy's movements, and prevent the enemy from observing those of the army it protects. In adopting this line, it is also necessary to keep the outposts so near together that they will be capable of offering a vigorous resistance to an attack from any quarter; and to retire upon the main body in good order. Composed of the light troops of an army, the advanced guard should be its right hand; always on the alert; never in a wrong position. It should keep the enemy in a state of constant alarm, forcing him to take all kinds of inconvenient precautions to protect his flank and rear. This service, under the command of an energetic general, is the safeguard of an army; allowing soldiers to rest in the field, within a short distance of the enemy, as securely and freely as in barracks. But men on out-post duty have no easy time of it. To destroy them all kinds of subtle plots are laid; they may never take forty winks of sleep; for they may be picked off at any moment from behind the nearest bush. They are military policemen for the time being; protecting those encamped far away behind them. There lies the army under the white tents upon which the moon shines coldly! behind a fan of outer posts, bristling with bayonets. Behind this fan (the popular form for the outposts) the army lies as securely as the lady listens to love behind hers, protected by it from the dragon eyes of her maiden aunt. To pass the edge of this military fan is a dangerous service. We remember how the forlorn hope of the French army passed the Russian outposts in the dead of night, crawling upon their stomachs; how some Zouaves braved Russian bullets to secure a bunch of radishes from a Sebastopol garden. When we consider the system on which these military fans are made, we shall understand the extent of the danger.

The outer edge of the fan, behind which the army lies in security, consists of a number of outposts. The further these outposts can be removed from the divisions which they protect, the better. These posts are established at short distances one from the other, upon commanding ground, whence the enemy may be satisfactorily observed, and with facilities for communicating with one another. The great object, of course, is to render the passage of the enemy beyond the line impossible. Thus behind the posts are stationed,

upon the main roads leading to the camp, strong pickets, destined to come to the aid of the outposts in the event of a sortie, or to protect the outposts when they are compelled to fall back before an overpowering force. Another point which the general of the advanced guard has to consider in the arrangement of his outposts is, the prevention of reconnoitering expeditions on the part of the enemy. To see the enemy's position and force, and to keep him in ignorance of the extent and plans of the army which is before him, are the most important duties of the advanced guard.

An army generally encamps in a position where the ground protects its flanks, and where the vigilance of a slight force of light cavalry and light infantry, kept in constant intercommunication by mounted patrols prevents surprise. The outposts are always, or nearly always, in view of the pickets, or grand-gardes, by which they are supported, and the sentinels within view of the outposts to which they belong. When this arrangement is rendered impossible by the nature of the ground, videttes are posted between the outposts and their supports, to keep them in constant communication. It is laid down as a rule, that outposts of infantry should not be more than six hundred paces from each other, nor more than three hundred from their sentinels; while outposts of cavalry may be fifteen hundred paces from one another, and six hundred from their videttes. Each post should be four times as numerous as the number of videttes or sentinels that it furnishes. The grand-gardes—posted along the main avenues leading to the camp, the business of which is to support the outposts—have generally double the strength of the outposts, and are placed about two hundred paces behind foot sentinels, and six hundred paces behind mounted sentinels. Behind the grand-gardes are pickets still more numerous; whose business, in case of a serious attack, is to oppose a sturdy opposition to the advance of the enemy. They are generally posted in good positions for defence, as in villages, defiles, and other places offering cover. If the ground be flat, they entrench themselves. They send out sentinels or scouts, who keep them in constant communication with the outposts. These pickets, when required to offer a vigorous resistance to the enemy, consist of two or three hundred soldiers of various arms. Generally the grand-gardes and outposts in advance of each picket muster altogether a third of the force of the picket. Artillery is rarely employed in these advanced positions except to command an important defile or passage; it is then strongly guarded. Behind the pickets massed upon the central ground, with the artillery, is the bulk of the advanced guard, ready to carry help to any point where it may be needed. Great care is taken to acquaint the commanding officer of each

picket with the exact whereabouts of the force upon which he is to retire for support in case of attack, and with the roads conducting to it. Upon the exactness of these instructions the safety of the army may depend; inasmuch as a mistake by a picket, in its retreat, might lay the whole army open to a sudden onslaught. The importance of confiding the points of the military fan to vigilant officers—of giving them a faithful map of the country, good glasses, and ready writing materials—the importance of details like these, in the government of an army in the field, seldom strike us, civilians, as we cozily read over the accounts of army movements in the columns of our morning paper. Yet the duties of the man who commands an outpost are grave and onerous in the highest degree. He must be brave as a lion, crafty as a cat. When he perceives that the enemy is not in his immediate neighbourhood, he must send out scouts in all directions, till he discovers the points to which he has retired. Every sound he hears must be noted; every countryman he meets must be questioned; the rise of every cloud of dust must be chronicled, to estimate the movements or intentions of the foe. His conjectures and his observations must be clearly given to the officer of the grand-garde immediately in his rear. Again, he is responsible that all communications with the enemy shall be impossible along the line of his sentinels. No bearer of a flag of truce should pass his line of posts before he has received an order to this effect from his superior officer. He must take care that all his men do not eat their meals at the same time; that they lie down in rotation, and that the horses of the mounted patrols go to drink two or three at a time only. As soon as night closes in, his responsibilities double. Half of his men remain under arms all night; the rest sit, having their arms and saddles at their side. Colonel Tevis insists that these poor fellows should never be allowed to occupy a house; since, enclosed within four walls, they neither hear nor see all that is going on around them. If the time be winter, and a fire be indispensable, only half of the outpost should be allowed to approach it at once, the other half of the force being stationed at a distance ready to receive the enemy. As the night wears through, in the performance of these exciting duties, while, far away behind, the divisions sleep securely, the grand-gardes prepare to relieve the outposts. With the first break of day, fresh soldiers approach their tired brethren of the outposts to relieve them—this time being sagaciously chosen by prudent generals, because it is the time most favourable to the enemy for an attack. Thus, in the event of a skirmish, the outposts are doubly strong at the most perilous moment, the relieving and

the relieved soldiers being together. Should the advance of the enemy appear general, the officer commanding an outpost collects his sentinels, and opposes the advance sufficiently to give the grand-gardes time to receive the advanced pickets of the enemy, and to keep up a harassing fire upon them. As the pickets retire upon the main body, opposing the enemy and slackening his advance at every turn, they make for its flanks, in order to leave its front clear for any movements which the commander may consider advisable. It is, however, a rule that the pickets should never retire before their scouts and outposts have joined them.

In this way, is the fan of an army regulated. Upon its proper construction, as the reader will have already observed, depends the safety of an army, very often. And thus responsibility descends from the field-marshal to the captain, spying through a night-glass over a gloomy landscape to catch reflections of the enemy's bivouac fires—the dust of his horses' hoofs, or the glitter of his steel, under the pallid rays of the moon. Let the captain doze over his work; let the sentinel get drowsy before the icy wind; and the enemy may suddenly cleave his way to the heart of the camp, or a spy may go safely through the lines. To any perceptible movement in the solemn gloom, the sentinel answers with a bullet. Even now, as we write at night, many countrymen's eyes are strained over the gloom of a Crimean landscape, staring excitedly to catch any movement of the enemy in the distance. Many a light-hearted young fellow, who has spent years in London whispering roguish things behind marabout fans, to willing ears and sparkling eyes, now sternly holds the command of a point in the great military fan that protects the slumbers of our soldiers. And if, this night, under the heavy clouds of a Crimean sky, and in the drenching rain, the enemy approach our young friend's point of the fan, sure enough are we—though we thought him an empty fellow when he aired his Piccadilly collars in Hyde Park—that he will not hold his weapon with a trembling hand, nor give an inch of ground too early. It is a pity he does not know enough to do all that is in the capacity of his brave nature. Still we think tenderly of him; seeing him at this moment with his brave face full before the enemy. The Russians will not pass his sentinels, we warrant.

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BEEF.

IF I have a mission upon this earth, (apart from the patent and notable one of being a frightful example to the rising generation of blighted existence and misused energies)—that mission is, I believe, beef. I am a Cœlebs, not in search of a wife, as in Mrs. Hannah More's white-neck-clothed novel, but in search of beef. I have travelled far and wide to find it—good, tender, nourishing, juicy, succulent; and when I die, I hope that it will be inscribed on my tombstone: "Here lies one who sought for beef. Tread lightly on his grave: quia multum amavit."

Next to the Habeas Corpus and the Freedom of the Press, there are few things that the English people have a greater respect for and a livelier faith in than beef. They bear, year after year, with the same interminable unvarying series of woodcuts of fat oxen in the columns of the illustrated newspapers; they are never tired of crowding to the Smithfield Club cattle-show; and I am inclined to think that it is their honest reverence for beef that has induced them to support so long the obstruction and endangerment of the thoroughfares of the metropolis, by oxen driven to slaughter. Beef is a great connecting link and bond of better feeling between the great classes of the commonwealth. Do not dukes hob and nob with top-booted farmers over the respective merits of short-horns and Alderneys? Does not the noble Marquis of Argentfork give an ox to be roasted whole on the village green when his son, the noble Viscount Silvercorrel, comes of age? Beef makes boys. Beef nerves our navvies. The bowmen who won Cressy and Agincourt were beef-fed, and had there been more and better beef in the Crimea a year ago, our soldiers would have borne up better under the horrors of a Chersonesean winter. We feast on beef at the great Christian festival. A baron of beef at the same time is enthroned in St. George's Hall, in Windsor's ancient castle, and is borne in by lacqueys in scarlet and gold. Charles the Second knighted a loin of beef; and I have a shrewd suspicion that the famous Sir Bevis of Southampton was but an ardent admirer, and doughty knight-errant in the cause of beef. And who does not know

the tradition that even as the first words of the new-born Gargantua were "A boyre, à boyre," signifying that he desired a draught of Burgundy wine—so the first intelligible sounds that the infant Guy of Warwick ever spake were, "Beef, beef!"

When the weary pilgrim reaches the beloved shores of England after a long absence, what first does he remark—after the incivility of the custom-house officers—but the great tankard of stout and the noble round of cold beef in the coffee-room of the hotel? He does not cry "Io Bacche! Evœ Bacche!" because beef is not Bacchus. He does not fall down and kiss his native soil, because the hotel carpet is somewhat dusty, and the action would be, besides, egregious; but he looks at the beef, and his eyes filling with tears, a corresponding humidity takes place in his mouth; he kisses the beef; he is so fond of it that he could eat it all up; and he does ordinarily devour so much of it to his breakfast, that the thoughtful waiter gazes at him, and murmurs to his napkin, "This man is either a cannibal or a pilgrim grey who has not seen Albion for many years."

By beef I mean, emphatically, the legitimate, unsophisticated article. Give me my beef, hot or cold, roast, boiled, or broiled; but away with your beef-kickshaws, your beef-stews, your beef-haricoes, your corned beef, your hung beef, and your spiced beef! I don't think there is anything so contemptible, fraudulent, adulterine in the whole world (of cookery) as a beef sausage. I have heard that it is a favourite dish with pick-pockets at their raffle-suppers. I believe it. There was a boy at school with me in the byegone—a day-boy—who used to bring a clammy brownish powder, in a sandwich-box, with him for lunch. He called it powdered beef; and he ate this mahogany, sawdust-looking mixture between slices of stale bread and butter. He was an ill-conditioned boy who had begun the world in the face-grinding sense much too early. He lent halfpence at usury, and dealt in sock (which was our slang for surreptitious sweet-stuff); and I remember with what savage pleasure I fell upon and beat him in the course of a commercial transaction involving a four-bladed penknife he had sold me, and which wouldn't cut—no,

not even slate-pencil. But the penknife was nothing more than a pretext: I beat him for his beef. He had the ring-worm, and it was bruited about afterwards that he was of Jewish parentage. I believe, when he began life, he turned out but badly.

I am reminded, however, that the subject of beef, as a British institution, has already been treated at some length in this journal.* I have merely ventured a few remarks on the bovine topic generally, to preface the experiences I have to record of some recent travels in search of beef I have made in the capital of France. One might employ oneself better, perhaps, than in transcribing the results of a week's hankering after the flesh-pots of Egypt; and surely the journey in search of bread is long and wearisome enough that we might take beef as it comes, and thankfully. But, as I have said, beef is my mission. I am a collector of bovine experiences, as some men collect editions of Virgil, and some Raffaele's virgins, and some broadsides, and some butterflies. And I know that there are moralities to be found in beef as well as in the starry heavens and the vestiges of creation.

Let me first sum up all the knowledge I have acquired on the subject, by stating my firm conviction that there is no beef in Paris,—I mean, no beef fit to be eaten by a philobosopher. Some say that the French cut their meat the wrong way; that they don't hang it properly; that they don't hang it enough; that they beat it; that they overcook it. But I have tasted infinite varieties of French beef, of the first, second, and third categories. I have had it burnt to a cinder, and I have had it very nearly raw. I have eaten it in private English families resident in Paris, and dressed by English cooks. It is a delusion: there is no beef in Lutetia.

The first beef I tried in my last campaign was the evening I dined at His Lordship's. Don't be alarmed, my democratic friend. I am not upon Lord Cowley's visiting list, nor are any coronetted cards ever left at my door on the sixth storey. I did not receive a card from the British Embassy on the occasion of the last ball at the Hôtel de Ville; and I am ashamed to confess that, so anxious was I to partake of the hospitality of the Prefect of the Seine (the toilettes and the iced punch are perfect at his balls), that I was mean enough to foreswear temporarily my nationality, and to avail myself of the card of Colonel Waterton Privilege of Harshellopolis, Mass.:—said colonel being at that time, and in all probability exceedingly sick, in his stateroom of the United States steamer Forked Lightning, in the middle of the Atlantic ocean. But, by His Lordship's I mean an Anglo-French restaurant—named after a defunct English city eating-house—situate near the Place de la Concorde, and where

I heard that real English roast beef was to be obtained at all hours in first-rate condition.

Now, there is one thing that I do not like abroad; yea, two that are utterly distasteful to me. The one thing is my countrymen's hotels and restaurants. These houses of refection I have usually found exceedingly uncomfortable. So I was disposed to look somewhat coldly upon His Lordship's invitation, as printed upon placards, and stencilled on the walls, till I was assured that his beef was really genuine, and that he was an Englishman without guile.

His Lordship's mansion I found unpretending, even to obscurity. There was no portecochère, no courtyard, no gilt railings, nor green verandahs. His Lordship's hotel was, in fact, only a little slice of a shop, with one dining-room over it; for which I was told he paid an enormous rent—some thousands of francs a-year. In his window were displayed certain English viands pleasant to the sight: a mighty beef-steak pie just cut; the kidney end of a loin of veal, with real English stuffing, palpable to sight; some sausages that might have been pork, and of Epping; some potatoes in their homely brown jackets, just out at elbows, as your well-done potatoes should be, with their flannel under-garments peeping through; and a spherical mass, something of the size and shape of a bomb-shell, dark in colour, speckled black and white, and that my beating heart told me was a plum-pudding. A prodigious Cheshire cheese, rugged as Helvellyn, craggy as Criffell, filled up the background like a range of yellow mountains. At the base there were dark forests of bottles branded with the names of Allsopp, and Bass, and Guinness, and there were cheering announcements framed and glazed, respecting Pale Ale on draught, L.L. whisky, and Genuine Old Tom.* I rubbed my hands in glee. "Ha! ha!" I said internally. "Nothing like our British aristocracy, after all. The true stock, sir! May His Lordship's shadow never diminish."

His Lordship's down-stairs' apartment was somewhat inconveniently crowded with English grooms and French palefreniers, and with an incorrigible old Frenchman, with a pipe as strong as Samson, a cap, cotton in his ears, and rings in the lobes thereof, who had learnt nothing of English but the oaths, and was cursing some very suspicious-looking meat (not my beef, I hope) most energetically. I have an opinion that stables and the perfume thereof are pretty nearly analo-

* Our gallant allies have yet much to learn about our English manners and customs. Only the other night, in the Foyer of the Grand Opera, I saw (and you may see it there still if you are incredulous) a tastefully enamelled placard, announcing that "genuine Old Tom" was to be had at the Buffet. Imagine Sir Harcourt Courtley asking the Countess of Swansdown, in the crush-room of Covent Garden Theatre, if she would take half a quarter of gin!

gous the whole world over ; so, at the invitation of a parboiled-looking man in a shooting-jacket and a passion (who might have been His Lordship himself for aught I knew), I went up-stairs. There was an outer chamber, with benches covered with red cotton velvet, and cracked marble tables, like an indifferent café ; where some bearded men were making a horrible rattle with their dominoes, and smoking their abominable cigars (surely a course of French cigars is enough to cure the most inveterate smoker of his love for the weed). This somewhat discomposed me ; but I was fain to push forward into the next saloon where the tables were laid out for dining ; and taking my seat, to wait for beef.

There was myself and a black man, and his (white) wife, the Frenchman with the spectacles, and the Frenchman with the bald head (I speak of them generically, for you are sure to meet their fellows at every public dining-table abroad), the poor old Frenchman with the wig the paralytic head and the shaking hands that trifle with the knives and forks, as though they were red-hot. There were half-a-dozen other sons of Gaul ; who, with their beards, cache-nezs, and paletôts, all made to pattern, might have been one another's brothers ; two ancient maiden ladies, who looked like English governesses, who had passed, probably, some five-and-thirty years in Paris, and had begun to speak a little of the language ; a rude young Englishman, who took care to make all the company aware of the coarseness of his birthplace ; an English working engineer, long resident abroad, much travel-worn, and decidedly oily, who had a voice like a crank, and might have been the identical engineer that Mr. Albert Smith met on the Austrian Lloyd's steamer ; and a large-headed little boy, with around English jacket, who sat alone, eating mournfully, and whom I could not help fancying to be some little friendless scholar in a great French school, whose jour de sortie it was, and who had come here to play at an English dinner. The days be short to thee, little boy with the large head ! May they fly quickly till the welcome holidays, when thou wilt be forwarded, per rail and boat, to the London Bridge station of the South Eastern Railway, to be left till called for. I know from sad experience how very weary are the strange land and the strange bed, the strange lessons and the strange playmates, to thy small English heart !

A gaunt, ossified waiter, with blue black hair, jaws so closely shaven that they gave him an unpleasant resemblance to the grand inquisitor of the holy office in disguise seeking for heretics in a cook-shop, and who was, besides, in a perpetual cold perspiration of anger against the irate man in the shooting jacket below, and carried on fierce verbal warfare with him down the staircase. This waiter rose up against me, rather than

addressed me, and charged me with a pike of bread, cutting my ordinarily immense slice from it. I mildly suggested roast beef, wincing, it must be owned, under the eye of the cadaverous waiter ; who looked as if he were accustomed to duplicity, and did not believe a word that I was saying.

"Ah ! rosbif !" he echoed, "bien saignant n'est ce pas ?"

Now, so far from liking my meat "bien saignant" I cannot even abide the sight of it rare, and I told him so. But he repeated "bien saignant," and vanished.

He came again, though ; or rather his Jesuitical head protruded itself over the top of the box where I sat (there were boxes at His Lordship's) and asked :

"Paint portare ? p'lale ? ole' ale ?"

I was nettled, and told him sharply that I would try the wine, if he could recommend it. Whereupon there was silence, and then I heard a voice crying down a pipe, "Paint portare !"

He brought me my dinner, and I didn't like it. It was bien saignant, but it wasn't beef, and it swam in a dead sea of gravy that was not to my taste ; fat from strange animals seemed to have been grafted on to the lean. I did not get on better with the potatoes, which were full of promise, like a park hack, and unsatisfactory in the performance. I tried some plum-pudding afterwards ; but, if the proof of the pudding be in the eating, that pudding remains unproved to this day ; for, when I tried to fix my fork in it, it rebounded away across the room, and hit the black man on the leg. I would rather not say anything about the porter, if you please ; and perhaps it is well to be brief on the subject of the glass of hot gin-and-water I tried afterwards, in a despairing attempt to be convivial ; for it smelt of the midnight-lamp like an erudite book, and of the midnight oil-can, and had the flavour of the commercial terebinthium, rather than of the odoriferous Juniperus. I consoled myself with some Cheshire cheese, and asked the waiter if he had the Presse.

"Ze Time is gage," he answered.

I did not want the Times. I wanted the Presse.

"Sare," he repeated wrathfully, "Ze Time is gage. Le Journal Anglais (he accentuated this spitefully) is gage."

He would have no further commerce with me after this ; and, doubtlessly thinking that an Englishman who couldn't eat his beef under-done or indeed at all, and preferred the Presse to the Times newspaper, was an out-cast and a renegade, abandoned me to my evil devices, and contented himself with crying "Voila !" from the murky distance without coming when I called. He even declined to attend to receive payment, and handed me over for that purpose to a long French boy in a blouse, whose feet had evidently not long been emancipated from the

pastoral sabots, whose hair was cropped close to his head (in the manner suggesting county gaol at home, and ignorance of small tooth-combs abroad), and who had quite a flux of French words, and tried to persuade me, to eat civet de lièvre that was to be served up at half-past seven of the clock.

But I would have borne half a hundred disappointments similar to this dinner for the sake of the black man. Legs and feet! he was a character! He sat opposite to me, calm, contented, magnificent, proud. He was as black as my boot, and as shiny. His woolly head, crisped by our bounteous mother Nature, had unmistakably received a recent touch of the barber's tongs. He was perfumed; he was oiled; he had moustaches (as I live!) twisted out into long rats'-tails by means of pommade Hongroise. He had a tip. He had a scarlet Turkish cap with a long blue tassel. He had military stripes down his pantaloons. He had patent leather boots. He had shirt-studs of large circumference, pins, gold waistcoat-buttons, and a gorgeous watch-chain. I believe he had a crimson under-waistcoat. He had the whitest of cambric handkerchiefs, a ring on his forefinger, and a stick with an overpowering gold knob. He was the wonderfulest nigger that the eye ever beheld.

He had a pretty little English wife—it is a fact, madam—with long auburn ringlets, who it was plain to see was desperately in love with, and desperately afraid of, him. It was marvellous to behold the rapt, fond gaze with which she contemplated him as he leaned back in his chair after dinner, and refreshed his glistening ivories with a toothpick. Equally marvellous was the condescension with which he permitted her to eat her dinner in his august presence, and suffered her to tie round his neck a great emblazoned shawl like a flag.

Who could he have been? The father of the African twins; the Black Malibran's brother; Baron Pompey; Prince Mousalakatzie of the Orange River; Prince Bobo; some other sable dignitary of the empire of Hayti; or the renowned Soulouque himself, incognito? Yet, though affable to his spouse, he was a fierce man to the waiter. The old blood of Ashantee, the ancient lineage of Dahomey, could ill brook the shortcomings of that cadaverous servitor. There was an item in the reckoning that displeased him.

"Wass this sa?" he cried, in a terrible voice; "wass this, sa? Fesh your mas'r, sa!"

The waiter cringed and fled, and I laughed.

"Good luck have thou with thine honour; ride on —" honest black man; but oh, human nature, human nature! I would not be your nigger for many dollars. More rib-roasting should I receive, I am afraid, than ever Uncle Tom suffered from fierce Legree.

I have not dined at His Lordship's since—

I would dine there any day to be sure of the company of the black man—but I have more to say about Beef.

ADVENTURES OF A RUSSIAN SOLDIER.

I was inscribed as a sergeant of the Séménofski guards at a very early age. I was entrusted to the care of one of my father's serfs, named Savéliitch. He taught me to read and write, and was very indignant when he learned that a Frenchman was to be conveyed back to the estate with the annual provision of wine and oil from Moscow. "Nobody can say that the child has not been well fed, well combed, and well washed," murmured old Savéliitch; "why then spend money on a Frenchman, while there are plenty of native servants in the house!"

M. Beaupré came and engaged himself to teach me French, German, and all the sciences; but he made me teach him my native language, and taught me many things that did me little good. He was fond of brandy, and was, as I was told, too ardent an admirer of ladies. I remember only that one day, when my respected tutor was lying upon his bed in a hopeless state of drunkenness, and I was cutting up a map of Moscow for a kite, my father entered the room, boxed my ears, and turned moussié out of the house, to the great joy of Savéliitch, and to my sorrow. My education being thus brought to a sudden close, I amused myself until I had completed my sixteenth year, in playing at leap-frog, and watching my mother make her exquisite preparations of honey, when one day my father said to my mother:

"Avdotia Vassiliéva, what age is Pétroucha?"

"He has just entered his seventeenth year. Pétroucha was born the same year that Nastasia Garasimova lost her eye, and—"

"Well, well," my father replied, "he starts for his regiment to-morrow."

My mother burst into tears, and I jumped for joy.

"Don't forget, André Pétrouvitch," said my mother to my father, who was writing my letter of introduction, "to remember me to Prince B——, and to bid him show every kindness to Pétroucha."

"Pétroucha is not going to St. Petersburg," my father replied. I was heart-broken. I had dreamed of nothing but St. Petersburg. When my father had finished the letter, he turned to me and said:

"This letter is addressed to André Karlovitch, my old companion in arms. He is at Orenberg, and you will join him there." The kibitka was at the door. The servants had stowed away in it a tea-service, and pies of different sorts tied up in cloths. My parents gave me their blessing. My father said to me, "Good bye, Pierre; serve your Empress with fidelity; obey your superiors, don't seek favours from them; and remember

the proverb, 'Take care of your coat while it is new, and of your honour while it is white.'" A hare-skin touloup, or cape, was thrown about me, and over it a fox-skin cloak. Thus equipped, I took my seat in the kibitka, and left my parents, accompanied by Savélitich.

We arrived that night at Simbirsk, where I committed my first folly by losing one hundred roubles at billiards, while Savélitich was out, executing some orders from home with which he had been entrusted. I lost this sum to Ivan Lowrine, a captain of hussars. On this occasion I also became intoxicated for the first time. Savélitich hastened my departure the following morning, and reluctantly paid my losses. I promised him that, henceforth, I would not spend a single kopek without his consent.

We travelled rapidly; and, as we approached our destination, the country became a measureless waste, covered with snow. Presently, the coachman, taking off his hat, asked me anxiously whether we should not return; and, pointing to a white cloud far in the east, said, "That is the bourane!"

I had heard of the bourane, and I knew that it sometimes buried whole caravans of travellers. I knew it to be a tremendous cloud of snow, out of which few people, once fairly in it, ever made their way. But this one seemed to me to be a long way off, so I told the coachman to drive forward. We went at full gallop. The wind rose rapidly, however; the little white cloud became a huge moving snow mountain; very fine flakes began to fall about us; then the wind howled, and in a few minutes we could not see an inch beyond our noses. It was, in truth, the bourane. The horses stopped; the snow began to bury us; Savélitich began to scold; the coachman played nervously with the horses' harness—and no house could be seen. We had begun to believe we should be soon buried alive, when we suddenly perceived a black object near us, which we were afraid was a wolf, but which turned out to be a man. We asked our way; he replied that he knew the country under ordinary circumstances, but could not distinguish anything then. Suddenly he cried, "Turn to the left—there you will find a house: I smell the smoke."

The coachman managed to whip the horses into unusual exertion, and we presently reached a hut lighted by a louchina (a deal stick which serves for a candle). The ornaments of the little room into which we were ushered were a carbine and a Cossack hat. The Cossack host got us some tea; and then I inquired for a guide. Some one called out from a recess that he was cold, for he had pawned his touloup the day before, for brandy. I offered him a cup of tea, and he advanced to drink it. He was a remarkable fellow in appearance: tall, with very broad shoulders. He wore a black beard, and short

hair; his eyes were restless and large; the expression of his face was, at times agreeable, at times malicious. He preferred brandy to tea; and, having held a mysterious conversation with the host, he retired for the night. I did not like the look of affairs; the hut was in the middle of the steppe—very lonely, and very like the meeting-place for thieves.

But we were not robbed; and, the following morning, as we left to proceed on our journey, I gave my hare-skin touloup, much against my servant's wish, to the guide who had led us to the house. The guide was grateful, and promised that if ever he could be of service to me I should be served. At that time the promise seemed sufficiently ridiculous.

We arrived without further adventure at Orenberg, where I presented my letter to the general, who received me kindly, and then sent me to serve, under the orders of Captain Mirinoff, in the fort of Bélogorsk. This did not please me. The fort was a wretched little village, surrounded by palisades. I stopped before a little wooden house, which, I was informed, was the commandant's. I entered. In the antechamber I found an old man, seated upon a table, occupied in sewing a blue patch upon one of the elbows of a green uniform. He beckoned me into the inner chamber. It was a clean little room, with an officer's commission, neatly framed, hanging against the wall, and rude prints surrounding it. In one corner of the room an old lady, with a handkerchief bound round her head, was unwinding some thread from the hands of a little old man with only one eye, who wore an officer's uniform. The old lady, on seeing me, said:

"Ivan Kourmitch is not at home; but I am his wife. Be good enough to love us, and take a seat, my little father."

I obeyed, and the old lady sent for her subaltern, the ouriadnik. While the servant was gone, the lady and the officer both questioned me, and judged that it was for some offence that I was sent to Bélogorsk. The lady informed me that Chvabrine, an officer at Bélogorsk, had been sent thither for duelling. The ouriadnik appeared, and was a fine specimen of a Cossack officer.

"Quarter Piote Andréitch," said the old lady, "upon Siméon Kouroff. The fellow let his horse break into my garden."

These, my quarters, looked out upon the dreary steppe. The next morning a little fellow, with a remarkably vivacious appearance, came to see me. I found that he was Chvabrine, the duellist. His lively conversation amused me, and we went together that day to the commandant's house to dinner. As we approached it I saw about twenty little old invalids, wearing long tails, and three-cornered hats, ranged in order of battle. The commandant, a tall, hale old man, dressed in a cotton nightcap and a morning gown, was reviewing this terrible force. He spoke some civil words to

me, and we left him to complete his military duties. When we arrived at his house, we found the old one-eyed man and Palachka laying the cloth. Presently, the captain's daughter, Marie, made her appearance. Chvabrine had described her to me as a very foolish person. She was about sixteen years of age, had a fine fresh colour, and was very bashful.

I did not think much of her that day. She blushed terribly when her mother declared that all she could bring her husband in the way of wealth was a comb and a few kopeks. We talked chiefly of the possibility of standing a siege from the Bachkirs; and the commandant declared that if such a siege occurred he would teach the enemy a terrible lesson. I thought of the twenty invalids, and did not feel quite so confident on the subject.

Ivan Kourmitch and his wife Vassilissa were very kind to me, and received me as one of the family. I liked the little one-eyed officer; I became more intimate with Marie.

Father Garasim and his wife Akoulina I was also glad to meet, almost daily, at the commandant's house. But I soon disliked Chvabrine. He talked lightly and slightly of Marie, and even of Vassilissa. One day, however, I read to him some amorous verses I had written; he saw at once, and truly, that they were addressed to Marie. He ridiculed them mercilessly, and told me that if I wished to win the love of Marie I had only to give her a pair of ear-rings. I flew into a passion, and asked him how he dared to take away the character of the commandant's daughter. He replied, impertinently, that he spoke of her from personal experience. I told him to his teeth that he lied. He demanded satisfaction.

I went to the one-eyed officer—whom I found threading mushrooms for Vassilissa—to ask him to act as second. But he declined. In the evening I was at the commandant's house; and thinking that night that it might be my last, as my duel with Chvabrine was to be early on the morrow, Marie appeared dearer to me than ever. Chvabrine came, and behaved so insolently that I could hardly wait until the morrow.

I was to my time, the next morning, behind a haystack; Chvabrine was also punctual. We had just stripped our coats off, when the one-eyed officer appeared with five invalids, and marched us off in custody.

Vassilissa ordered us to give up our swords, and told Palachka to take them up into the loft; for, in truth, Vassilissa was the commandant of Bélogorsk. She then ordered Ivan Kourmitch to put us in opposite corners of the rooms, and to feed us on bread and water until we repented. Marie was very pale. After a stormy discussion, however, our swords were restored to us, and I parted with my adversary: feigning reconciliation, but secretly agreeing to meet again when the affair had quite blown over. The next night I had an opportunity of talking alone with

Marie Ivanovna; and I learned from her—how she blushed as she told me!—that Chvabrine had proposed marriage to her, but that she had refused him. This information explained to me the fellow's measured scandal. I burned to meet him again.

I had not to wait long. The next day, as I was biting my pen, thinking of a rhyme in an elegy I was composing, the very fellow tapped at my window. I understood him; seized my sword; engaged with him; and fell presently—wounded in the shoulder, and insensible.

When I became once more conscious, I found myself in a strange bed, Savéliitch by my side, and—Marie Ivanovna also. She asked me tenderly how I felt? Savéliitch, faithful fellow, cried out:

"Thanks to Heaven he recovers, after four days of it!"

But Marie interrupted him, and begged him not to disturb me with his loud exclamations. I seized her hand, and she did not withdraw it. Presently I felt her burning lips upon my forehead. I asked her then to become my wife. She begged me to calm myself, if only for her sake, and left me.

Although the barber of the regiment was my only medical adviser, I soon recovered. I and Marie were engaged; but she doubted whether my parents would consent. This doubt I could not help sharing; but the letter I wrote to my father on the subject appeared to both of us so tender and convincing, that we felt certain of its success, and gave ourselves up to the happy dreams of lovers.

I found that Chvabrine was a prisoner in the corn-warehouse, and that Vassilissa had his sword under lock and key. I obtained his pardon from the captain; and, in my happiness at tracing his wretched calumny to offended pride, forgave him. My father, in answer to my appeal, refused my prayer, and informed me that I should soon be removed from Bélogorsk. He also wrote to Savéliitch, and called him "an old dog," for not having taken better care of me.

I went straight to my mistress. She was bitterly distressed, but adjured me to follow the will of Heaven, and submit. She would never marry me, she declared, without the benediction of my parents, and from that day she avoided me.

This was towards the end of the year seventeen hundred and seventy-three. The inhabitants of the vast and fertile province of Orenberg had only lately acknowledged the sovereignty of the Czar, and were yet discontented, and full of revolutionary ideas. Every month some little insurrection bubbled up. To suppress this harassing state of things, the imperial government had erected fortresses in various parts of the province, and quartered therein Cossack soldiers. These Cossacks in their turn became turbulent; and the severe measures adopted by General

Trautenberg to reduce the army to obedience ended in his cruel murder, and a rising that cost much blood. By severe imperial punishments this rising had been suppressed; and it was only some time after my arrival at Bélogorsk that the authorities perceived how ineffectual their cruel punishments had been.

One evening when I was sitting alone in my room, thinking of doleful things, I was sent for by the commandant. I found him in consultation with Chvabrine, Ivan Ignatiitch, and the ouriadnik of the Cossacks. Neither Marie nor her mother appeared. The subject of our conference was the rising of the Cossacks under Pougatcheff, and his assumption of the style and title of Peter the Third. The commandant had received orders to be on his guard; and, if possible, to exterminate the enemy. Putting on his spectacles, he began to bustle about, and to issue orders to have the cannon cleaned; and to have the Cossacks kept true to the imperial cause.

The ouriadnik had already deserted to the rebel's camp. A Bachkir had been taken prisoner, with seditious papers upon his person. This prisoner, had been bound and secured in the commandant's loft; and it was resolved that he should be conducted before us, and be subjected to the torture, in order to extract from him a description of his leader's strength.

The commandant had scarcely ordered the Bachkir into his presence, when Vassilissa rushed into the chamber, and cried out that the rebels had taken the fortress of Nijnéosern, had hanged all the officers, and were now marching upon Bélogorsk. I thought of Marie, and trembled; but my energy increased with the occasion, and I at once advised the commandant to send the ladies to Orenberg. But Vassilissa would not hear of this. She declared that she would live and die with her husband, but that she thought Marie should be sent away; and that evening—the last Marie might possibly spend at Bélogorsk—the supper-table was surrounded by gloomy faces; and no face I think, was gloomier than mine. We parted early, but I contrived to forget my sword, that I might have an excuse for returning to bid Marie good-bye alone. When I returned, I clasped her in my arms; she sobbed bitterly; and thus we parted. I went home, and, without undressing myself, lay down to sleep.

I was aroused by the entrance of the corporal, who came to announce to me that the Cossack soldiers had all deserted the fortress, and that bands of strange men surrounded us. I thought, with horror, that Marie's retreat was cut off. Having given some necessary orders to the bearer of this unwelcome news, I hurried off to the commandant's house, as the day was dawning. On the way I was met by Ivan Ignatiitch, who told me that the commandant was already upon the ramparts, and that it was

too late for the commandant's daughter to be safely conveyed to Orenberg. Terribly agitated, I followed the one-eyed officer to that little eminence protected by a pallisade, which was the only fortification of Bélogorsk. The captain was arranging his soldiers in order of battle. In the dreary distance of the steppe, I could plainly see the Cossacks and the Bachkirs. The commandant ordered Ivan Ignatiitch to point the cannon upon the enemy, and the soldiers all vowed that they would fight to the death.

Presently, as the enemy began to advance in a compact mass, Vassilissa, accompanied by Marie, who would not leave her mother, appeared, to know how affairs stood. Marie's pale face was turned upon me, and I burned to prove to her that I had a brave spirit worthy of her love. In the midst of the advancing enemy, Pougatcheff, the renowned rebel leader, could be distinguished, mounted upon a white horse. In a few minutes four horsemen advanced from the main body, and rode close up to the ramparts. They were four traitors from the fortress. They called upon us not to resist. The captain replied by a volley which killed one of the four, and the rest rode back to join the advancing army. The balls now began to whistle about us; and at this moment the commandant ordered Vassilissa and Marie to withdraw. The old man blessed his child, embraced his wife, and bade her put a sarafan upon Marie, lest she should require it; the sarafan being the rich robe in which the dead are buried. The pale girl came back to me to me the sign of a last farewell, and then went away with her mother.

The fall of the fortress was soon accomplished. Our soldiers would not fight (though they had very much affected me when they swore to do it), but threw down their arms after the first assault. We were taken prisoners, and dragged by the triumphant rebels through the streets, to an open place, where Pougatcheff was seated surrounded by his officers. He was handsomely dressed; and, as I caught a glimpse of his face through the crowd, I thought it was one I had seen before. Pougatcheff ordered the commandant to swear fidelity to him as his lawful czar. Ivan Kourmitch replied with a defiance. Pougatcheff fluttered a white handkerchief in the air, and in a few moments our poor commandant was swinging from a gibbet. Ivan Ignatiitch shared his commander's fate: and then my turn came. I was ready to follow my brave brother officers; when Chvabrine, who had found time to cut his hair short and provide himself with a Cossack caftan, to desert to the enemy, whispered something in the chief's ear. Pougatcheff, without looking at me, said, "Hang him at once!"

The rope was round my neck, and my thoughts were with Heaven, when I was suddenly released. I found that Savéliitch had

thrown himself at the chief's feet, and told him that a large sum would be paid for my ransom. I was put aside, and remained a horrified spectator of the scenes which ensued. A Cossack killed Vassilissa with his sword, at the foot of her husband's gibbet, and then Pougatcheff went to Father Garasim's to dinner. I rushed to the commandant's house to find Marie; there every room had been ransacked. Presently, however, I found Palachka, and she told me that the commandant's daughter was at Father Garasim's house. Wild with terror I rushed thither, for it was to be the scene of Cossack revels. I asked for the father's wife; and she told me that she had passed Marie off as her niece. The poor girl was safe. I returned home hastily, passing groups of rebels engaged in the work of pillage.

Savéilitch asked me whether I did not remember Pougatcheff. I did not. He was surprised; and reminded me of the drunken fellow to whom I had given my touloup on my way to Orenberg. He was right; that drunken wanderer was now the successful rebel-chief, and I understood the mercy that had been extended to me. But I was much troubled. I could not make up my mind to leave Marie; yet I knew that my duty to my country forbade me to remain in the midst of a rebel camp. While I was thinking deeply of these opposite calls upon my conduct, a Cossack arrived to take me once more before his chief, at the commandant's house, where I found Pougatcheff seated at a table covered with bottles, and surrounded by eight or ten Cossack officers. The wine had already excited them. Chvabrine and the rebel ouriadjnik, who had deserted with the Cossacks from the fort, were of the party.

Pougatcheff welcomed me heartily, and bade his officers make place for me at the banqueting table. I sat down in silence. Here, on the previous night, I had taken leave of Marie.

All were on good terms and quite free with their chief. A march upon Orenberg having been arranged, the officers retired. I was about to follow them, when Pougatcheff bade me remain. When we were alone, he burst into a fit of laughter; telling me he had spared me because of my kindness to him when he was hiding from his enemies, and that now, if I would serve him, he would heap favours upon me. He asked me to tell him frankly whether or not I believed him to be the Czar. I was firm, and told him that he was too clever to believe me, even if I were capable of telling him a lie to serve my purpose. He promised to make me field-marshal if I would remain with him. I replied that I had sworn to serve the Empress; and that, if he wished to do me a favour, he would provide me with an escort to Orenberg. I told him that my life was in his hands, but that I would neither serve him nor promise not to

bear arms against him. He behaved well, and said I should be free.

Next morning I found Pougatcheff surrounded by his officers, throwing money to the crowd. He beckoned me to approach, told me to leave instantly for Orenberg, and to tell the garrison to expect him in a week. If they threw open the gates to him they would be well treated: if they resisted they must expect terrible consequences. He then turned to the crowd, and, to my horror, presented Chvabrine to them as their future governor! Chvabrine! Marie's traducer!

When Pougatcheff had left the square, I hastened to Father Garasim's house to learn that Marie was in a fever and quite delirious. I rushed to her room—how changed she was! She did not know me. How could I leave the poor orphan at Bélogorsk while Chvabrine remained governor? Suddenly, however, I thought that I might make all haste to Orenberg and return with a strong force, drive the rebels away, and claim my bride. I seized the poor girl's burning hand, kissed it, took leave of her good protectors, and was soon on my way, determined not to lose a moment.

As we approached Orenberg we saw the state prisoners with their shaven heads and disfigured faces, hard at work upon the fortifications. I was conducted direct to the general, who was lopping the fruit trees in the garden. I related to him the misfortunes of Bélogorsk, and pressed for help. He replied that there would be a council of war in the evening, and that he would be happy to see me at it. I was there punctually. A cup of tea was given to each guest, after which the general called upon all present to deliberate upon the state of affairs. The question was, should the Imperial troops act on the offensive or defensive? He declared that he should require an opinion from each individual; and, as usual, he should begin by asking the opinion of the junior officers. He then turned to me. I stated that the rebels were not in a condition to resist a disciplined army, and therefore urged the propriety of acting vigorously on the offensive: hereupon a little civil functionary, who was taking his third cup of tea with the help of an admixture of rum, suggested that operations should be confined to an offer of seventy or one hundred roubles for the head of Pougatcheff. Every voice was for defensive measures; and, when all present had delivered their opinions, the general, tapping the ashes out of his pipe, declared that he was of the same opinion as the ensign. I looked proudly about me; but the conclusion of the general's speech turned the triumph to the side of my opponents, for this gallant old soldier declared that he could not assume the responsibility of acting against the decision of the majority; therefore, preparations must be made for a siege, and we must depend upon the fire of the artillery, and the force of vigorous

sorties. I returned to my quarters in a state of wretched despondency. Poor Marie!

Pougatcheff was true to his message. He appeared before Orenberg with a considerable force, and the siege lasted long—with various fortune—until the people within the walls were almost starving. One day when some of our cavalry had dispersed a strong body of Cossacks, I was about to dispatch a loiterer with my Turkish sword, when he raised his hat and saluted me by name. I recognised the ouriadnik of Bélogorsk. He had a letter for me—I tore it open—it was from Marie. It informed me that she was the forced occupant of Chvabrine's house, and that within three days she would be compelled to marry him or be at his mercy. The girl implored me to fly to her succour.

Almost mad, I spurred my horse, rode at full gallop to the general's house, threw myself without ceremony into his room, and asked him to give me a battalion of soldiers and fifty Cossacks to drive the rebels out of Bélogorsk. The old soldier began to argue the matter coolly. This exasperated me, and I told him that the daughter of our late valiant commander was in the hands of Chvabrine, and that he was about to force her to marry him. The general thought that she might be very happy with him for a time, and that afterwards, when he had shot him on the ramparts of Orenberg, it would be time enough for me to marry the charming widow. There was no hope of softening the old man. I wandered away in despair. Out of this despair, grew a desperate resolution.

I resolved to leave Orenberg and go alone to Bélogorsk. Savéliitch tried in vain to dissuade me from my purpose, but without effect. I mounted my horse and rode briskly past the sentinels, out of Orenberg, followed by my faithful servant: who was mounted upon a lean horse, which one of the besieged had given him, having no more food for it. We rode hard; but night had closed in when we approached the great ravine where the main body of the rebels, under Pougatcheff, were encamped. Suddenly four or five lusty fellows surrounded me. I struck at the first with my sword—putting spurs to my horse, at the same time, and so escaped; but Savéliitch was overpowered, and, returning to help him, I was overpowered too, and through the darkness of that terrible night, led before the rebel chief that his guard might know whether they should hang me at once or wait till daylight. I was conducted at once to the isbâ, which was called the czar's palace. This imperial hut was lighted by two tallow candles, and was furnished like any common isbâ, except that the walls were finely papered. Pougatcheff, surrounded by his officers, recognised me at once, and bade all his attendants retire, except two, one of whom was a prisoner escaped from Siberia. This man's face was hideously

disfigured; his nose had been cut off, and his forehead and cheeks branded with red-hot irons. I told my business frankly, and Pougatcheff declared that the oppressor of the orphan should be hanged. But his officers dissuaded him, and one of them suggested that he should try the effects of a little torture upon me. Pougatcheff then questioned me as to the state of Orenberg; and, although I knew that the people were dying of hunger, I declared that it was excellently provisioned. This reply suggested to one of the chief's confidential friends, the propriety of having me hanged, as an impertinent liar. But Pougatcheff was a generous enemy, and made me declare to him that the commandant's daughter was my betrothed, and then he bade his officers prepare supper for us, saying that I was an old friend of his. I would have willingly avoided the festivity, but it was impossible; and I saw two little Cossack girls enter to spread the cloth, sadly enough. I ate my fish soup almost in silence.

The festivity was continued until all present were more or less intoxicated, and until Pougatcheff had fallen asleep in his seat. I was then conducted to the place in which I was to sleep, and was there locked up for the night. On the following morning I found a crowd surrounding a kibitka, in which Pougatcheff was seated. He beckoned me to a seat beside him, and to my astonishment shouted to the stout Tartar driver, "To Bélogorsk!" The kibitka slipped quickly over the snow. In a few hours I should see my beloved Marie.

We drew up, after a rapid journey, before the old commandant's house. Chvabrine hastened out to meet his sovereign; but was troubled when he saw me. Pougatcheff entered the house, drank a glass of brandy, then asked about Marie. Chvabrine said she was in bed. His chief then ordered the traitor to conduct us to her room. The fellow did so, but hesitated at her door,—pretended to have lost the key—then said that the girl was delirious. Pougatcheff forced the door with his foot; and, to my inexpressible horror I saw my dear betrothed lying upon the floor, in coarse peasant clothing, with bread and water before her. She shrieked when she saw me. Pougatcheff asked her what her husband had been doing to her; but she replied vehemently that she was not his wife, and never would be. Pougatcheff turned furiously upon Chvabrine, and Chvabrine, to my disgust, fell upon his knees at the rebel chief's feet. Then Pougatcheff told Marie that she was safe; but she recognised in him the murderer of her father and closed her eyes in horror. However, he made Chvabrine write a safe-conduct for Marie and me through all the provinces under the control of his followers; and then he went out to inspect the fortifications. I was left alone, and presently Marie came to me, with a smile upon her pale face, dressed in her own becoming clothes.

We enjoyed the tenderness of our meeting for a time in silence; but presently I told her my plan—how that it was impossible for her to accompany me to Orenberg, where starvation was playing terrible ravages;—how I had arranged that Savéliitch should conduct her to my father's house. Remembering my father's letter, she hesitated; but, at length, my arguments prevailed. In an hour my safe-conduct arrived.

We followed in a few hours, travelling in an old carriage that had belonged to Marie's father, Palachka being in attendance upon Marie. A little after nightfall we arrived at a small town which we believed to be in the possession of the rebels; but, on giving Pougatcheff's pass-word to the sentinels, we were instantly surrounded by Russian soldiers, and I was hurried off to prison. I demanded an interview with the commanding officer; but this was refused; and I was told the major had ordered Marie to be taken to him. Blind with fury, I rushed past the sentinels direct into the major's room, where I found him gambling with his officers. In a moment I recognised him,—as the commander—Lowrine, who had lightened my purse at Simbirsk.

He received me with a hearty greeting, and began to rally me about my travelling companion; but my explanations quieted his raillery, and he went to make his excuses to Marie for his rude message, and to provide her with the best lodging the town afforded. I supped with Lowrine that night, and agreed to do my duty, by joining his troop at once, and sending my betrothed on to Simbirsk, under the care of Savéliitch. Savéliitch had many objections, but I overpowered them; and Marie shed many tears, but I kissed them away before we parted.

The vigorous operations of the following spring brought many reverses to Pougatcheff; at last he was taken. I jumped for joy. I should clasp my beloved Marie once more in my arms. Lowrine laughed at my extravagant delight.

I was about to depart for my father's house when Lowrine entered my room, and showed me an order for my arrest, and safe conveyance to Kazan, to give evidence against Pougatcheff. This drove me nearly mad with disappointment. There was no evasion to be thought of, and I was escorted on my way to Kazan, between two hussars with drawn swords. I found this place almost in ashes. Here I was at once placed in irons, and locked up in a wretched cell. But my conscience was tranquil, for I had resolved to tell the simple truth about my transactions with Pougatcheff.

On the day after my arrival I appeared before the council. In reply to the questions of my judges—who were evidently prejudiced against me—I told every fact as it had occurred, until I came to Marie, when

I suddenly thought that to name her would be to ruin her. I hesitated and was silent. I was then confronted with another prisoner—Chvabrine! He lied my life away; swore that I had been a spy in the service of Pougatcheff, and we were both conducted back to prison.

Meantime, my father had received Marie kindly, and both my parents soon loved her. She explained to them the innocence of my connexion with the rebel chief, and they laughed at my adventures; until one day they received a letter from their relation, Prince Banojik, telling them that I had been convicted; but that, through his interference, my punishment was commuted to perpetual exile in Siberia.

My parents were stricken with grief, and Marie, with the soul of a heroine, started with Palachka and the faithful Savéliitch for St. Petersburg. She heard that the Court was at the summer palace of Tzarskoïé-Selo; and, with the assistance of the wife of a tradesman who served the Empress, gained access to the Palace gardens. Here she met a very agreeable lady, to whom she told her story, mentioning how I suffered because I would not even divulge her own name to exculpate myself. This lady listened attentively, and then promised to take care that the petition on my behalf should be presented to the Empress. A few hours afterwards, Marie was summoned before the Empress herself, in whom she recognised the lady she had met in the garden, and I received my pardon; the Empress being convinced that I was innocent.

Shortly afterwards, we were married.*

P.N.C.C.

THE thing which drove me from my late purchase of Longfield Hall in Cumberland—after nine months' trial,—back to town, has been a dead secret, until this present writing. My friends have found a mine of reasons to explain the circumstance: either the county families refused to visit us; or our income was not more than enough to maintain our lodge-keeper; or my eldest daughter had made love to the surgeon's young man at Nettleton; or I could not get on without my billiards and my five to two at whist; or I had been horse-whipped by Lord Wapshaw for riding over his hounds. There was more behind the curtain than people thought; and a thousand other good-natured explanations.

The actual facts are these: We arrived in Cumberland at the close of last autumn, and were as happy for some months as the days were long—and the days were very long indeed; everybody was kind and hospitable

* This story forms the substance of the most popular prose fiction of the Russian poet Pouschkin, who died in eighteen hundred and thirty-nine. He was historiographer to the Emperor Nicholas.

to us, and, on our parts, my port became a proverb and my daughters a toast. It was "Blathers, come and take pot-luck," from almost any neighbour I fell in with on my walks; or, "Mr. Blathers, we see nothing of your good wife and family," from the arch-deacon's lady, though we had been dining at the Cloisters three times within the fortnight; or "Lord and Lady Wapshaw have the——" but, no; the forms of familiarity, through which the high nobility communicate with their intimates, should not be lightly quoted. In a word, then, I was a popular man and "an accession to the county."

In the early spring time I began to feel the country gentleman's first grief; it came over with the swallows and, like them, never left my roof. Two of my acquaintances—men I had never esteemed as evil geni—rode over on an April day to Longfield; Sir Chuffin Stumps and Biffin Biffin of the Oaks; they were unusually cordial—quite empressés, my wife subsequently observed—to all of us, and after luncheon they desired to have some conversation with me in my study; that is the apartment wherein I keep my Landed Gentry, my stomach-pump (a capital thing to have in a country-house), and my slippers, and thither my two guests were ushered.

"It has always been the custom, my dear Blathers," said the baronet, "for the tenant of Longfield Hall to be the president of the Nettleton Cricket-club; that we should offer, that he should accept that honor, is due to his position in the county" (and indeed there was scarcely a flat piece of ground big enough to play upon in all the district, except in my paddock, I well know). "Lather, your predecessor, was president; Singin was president before him; the Longfields of Longfield were presidents time out of mind; and you—Blathers—you will be president now?"

"Of course you will," agreed Biffin.

"But, my dear sirs," said I, "what shall I have to do?—what will be my duties, my—"

"Do!—nothing at all," interrupted Sir Chuffin Stumps, "positively nothing; you have no duties, only privileges; let us have your ground to play upon; dine with us on Wednesdays in the tent, and on the great match-days; give a crust of bread and a shakedown to a swell from any long distance, now and then; you sit at the head of the festive board—your health is drunk continually—you are appealed to upon all the nice points of the game, and your decision is final. It's a splendid post!"

"Splendid!" echoed Biffin.

"But I have not played at cricket for this thirty years," I urged. "I don't know the rules. I couldn't see the ball, if you were to give me all creation. I'm as blind as a bat."

"Ha, ha, very good," laughed the baronet. "A bat—d'ye see, Biffin,—a bat? Blathers will do, depend upon it; he'll keep the table in a roar. As for the game, Mr. Presi-

dent, it's just what it used to be—round instead of under, that's all; and they cut a good deal oftener and stop much less, perhaps, than they used to do."

"Dear me," said I, "then there's not so many of them as there were, I suppose?"

"And as for near-sight," pursued Sir Chuffin, "play in spectacles. Bumpshus, our great wicket-keeper, he plays in spectacles; Grogam, your vice-president, he plays in spectacles; it's considered rather an advantage than otherwise to play in spectacles."

"Certainly," echoed Biffin, "it's a great advantage."

"So good-bye, Blathers," said both gentlemen rising; "the first of May is our meeting day, and the tent must be up and everything arranged, of course, by that time; but Grogam will write and let you know every particular."

And that was how I was made P.N.C.C., almost without a struggle.

In the course of a week I received a letter from Grogam, saying that there would be no difficulty whatever about anything; he would settle about the dining-tent, and the dressing-tent, and the cooking-tent, and I should only have the contracts for food and the wine-tasting to manage; the hiring of a bowler, the cutting and rolling of the grass. The coming matches for the year—I should, of course, arrange about myself; and I must be sure, he wrote, to let all the members of the club know of the day of meeting, and all the playing members of every match-day, and to dun Lord Wapshaw for his two years'-due subscriptions, as the treasurer didn't like to— with some other little matters; and, by the bye, did I happen to have my cricket toggery complete yet? as, if not, he (Grogam) could let me have a registered belt almost for nothing, because he had grown out of it, he was sorry to say, himself; also some improved galvanised india-rubber leg-guards, and some tubular batting-gloves, and a catapult—remarkably cheap. The postscript said, "of course you will come out in flannels and spike-soles."

I really thought when I first read this letter that I should have died with anxiety. I showed it to Mrs. Blathers, and she fairly burst into tears, and it was hours before we could either of us look our difficulties calmly in the face. Flannels! I had at that moment upon my person the only description of flannel garment which I possessed—a jerkin coming down no distance at all, and not to be dreamt of as a reception-dress to the club and half the county upon the first of May; spike-soles I did happen to have, being a skater, and set them out accordingly; but what possible use a pair of skates could be for cricket I could not imagine. The rest of the things I sent to Grogam for, who accommodated me with them very good-naturedly for fifteen pounds fifteen shillings. I put them all on—one

way and another—but could make no use of the catapult, except to sit in it, and my youngest child had convulsions, because, she sobbed, Pa looked so like that dreadful diver who lived in the pond at the Polytechnic.

I issued all the circulars, and signed myself the obedient servant of two hundred and forty-six strange gentlemen. I set my gardener and my coachman to roll out the cricket-ground. I tasted the bad sherry of the three Nettleton wine-merchants, and made two of them my enemies for life. My advertisements for a bowler were answered by a host of youths, with immense professions and very limited employment; some were from Lord's, some from the Oval, "the Maribun know'd him well enough," averred one young gentleman; another—with a great hollow in his hand from constant practice—affirmed, that "if I wanted hart, there I had it, and no mistake;" by which he meant that Art was enshrined in his proper person—and him I chose.

The first of May was as the poets love to paint it: the white tents glittered in sunshine, and the flags fluttered from their tops to a gentle breeze; the wickets were pitched upon the velvet sward, a fiddle and cornopean, concealed in the shrubbery, welcomed every arrival with *See the Conquering Hero Comes*; and the president's heart beat high with the sense of his position. I was attired in my full diving-dress, over the Nettleton uniform, and I held a bat in my right hand. The sides were chosen, and the game began; the carriages of the nobility and gentry formed a brilliant circle round the ground; a flying ball, struck by a hand more skilful than common, gave their situation the least touch of peril to enhance it. I myself was placed at one of the wickets, and my new bowler was placed opposite to me; he and I had practised together for a day or two, and he knew the balls I liked. I sent the sixth out to the left with a great bang, to the admiration of all but Grogram—who is a person of saturnine disposition—and got three runs; alas! the unprofessional Wilkins—the swiftest round-hand in the club—then inherited the mission of my destruction by bowling to me; the whizz of his balls absolutely took away my breath, and, if they had struck me, would doubtless have taken away my legs. But I placed the bat resolutely in the earth, and cowered behind it as well as I could manage. At last, after a warning cry of *Play!*—about as inappropriate a name as he could have called it—a tornado seemed to sweep past me, followed by a smack as of the resistance of flesh, and the wicket-keeper ejaculated "Out!" to my infinite joy.

Then came the happy time of cricket. The danger of the thing being over for that whole innings, you have nothing to do but to lie on the ground with a cigar, and explain how you had intended to have

caught that ball, and hit it between long field off and cover point; when you holloa out, "Butter-fingers!" and "Wide!" and "Run it out!" My happiness, however, was but of short duration; the new bowler delivered his deadly weapon against the rest in a manner he had known better than to practise upon me. Wilkins, too, seemed to derive new strength from every bail he struck towards the sky, and reaped the air with that tremendous arm of his more terribly than ever. In an hour and twenty minutes, we were fagging out on our side. The president had his choice of places; and, having observed that the wicket-keepers had either stopped the balls, or much diminished their velocity before they arrived at long-stop, I declared for that happy post. Alas! this was the case no longer. Swift as thought, and infinitely more substantial, the balls rushed with unabated fury beside me; hardly, by leaping into the air, and stretching my legs very wide apart, could I escape the fearful concussion. "Stop 'em! Stop 'em!" screamed the fielders. "Why the deuce don't he stop 'em?" bawled old Grogram, indignantly. So I waited my opportunity, watching, hat in hand, till one came slower than usual; and then I pounced upon him from behind, as a boy does on a butterfly. The crown of my hat was carried away, indeed, but the missile could not force its way through my person, and I threw it up to the man that hallo'd for it most in triumph; but my reputation as a cricketer was gone for ever.

At dinner I was comparatively successful. Lord Wapshaw was on my right; Sir Chuffin Stumps on my left; two long lines of gentlemen in flannels were terminated, respectively, by Grogram, opposite; the arch-deacon said grace; my new bowler assisted in waiting at table; and everything was upon the most gorgeous scale. Presently, however, the rain came down in torrents, and, in spite of the patent imperviousness of the tent, as vouched for by the vice-president, some umbrellas had to be borrowed from the hall (which were never returned). After dinner, there was a friend of his lordship to be ballotted for, and I distributed the little balls, as directed, and sent round the box. The rule of exclusion was one black ball in ten. There were four black balls to thirty white balls, and I had to publish the fact to all present.

"My friend black-balled, sir?" said the irascible peer. "Impossible! Did you do it?—did you?—did you?" he asked of everybody successively, amidst roars of laughter at his utter want of appreciation of the fundamental end and aim of the institution of vote by ballot. "There must be some mistake, sir," said he, when they had each and all declined to satisfy such an extraordinary enquiry. "Mr. Blathers, try them again."

This time there were four white balls to thirty black ones, a melancholy result which I had also to announce. His lordship left the tent—the marquee, somebody observed—like a maniac; and, though I swear I did not blackball his man, he never asked me to Hiltham Castle again from that day to this.

Now the season had begun, I became inundated with letters from the presidents of other cricket-clubs, requesting the N.C.C. to play them on some particular day; which, if it suited Wilkins, was invariably inconvenient to Grogam, and if it pleased Grogam, was sure to be the worst in the year for all the rest. So we were requested to name our own day, in a flippant, skittle-playing, come-on-when-you-like sort of manner, throwing upon me still greater responsibilities. The end of it was that the Levant club came to Nettleton, eat our dinner, drank our wine, and beat us; but refused to play a return match, or to give us any dinner whatever. Swiftly Downham, Esq., the man who has a European reputation as mid-wicket-on, honoured us by his company at Longfield “for a couple of nights,” as he bargained, and stayed a fortnight, smoking regularly in the best bedroom. Swiper, the professional batsman, also favoured us, and left me a cotton pocket-handkerchief with a full-length portrait of himself, in exchange, I hope—or else it was robbery—for a plain white silk one of my own. A whole school came over from Chumleyborough to play us, and nine of them took up their quarters at the hall. Fresh from toffee and gingerbeer as they were, I was fool enough to give them a champagne supper, of which the consequences were positively tremendous. They were all of them abominably ill, and the biggest boy kissed my daughter Florence, mistaking her, as he afterwards stated in apology, for one of the maids.

Wednesday, on which the club met, became my dark day of the week, and cast its shadow before and behind it; it was then that I made feud with Wilkins, by deciding that his balls were wide, and exasperated Grogam by declaring his legs were before wicket. I should not have known how these things were, even could I have seen so far; but I gave judgment alternately, now for the ins and now for the outs, with the utmost impartiality. One fine afternoon my own and favourite bowler absconded with about a dozen of the best bats, quite a forest of stumps, and a few watches belonging to the members of the N.C.C.; this was the drop too much that made my cup of patience overflow. I determined to resign, and I did resign.

Staying at Longfield Hall any longer, having ceased to be the president, I felt was not to be thought of, so I disposed of it. I wrote a cheque for a lot of things, embraced Grogam (whom I dearly love), and left the club my catapult. My last act of office was to appoint another bowler—a black man. He

does capitably, Wilkins writes; only—from his having been selected by me from a band of tumblers, I suppose—he will always bowl from under his left leg.

LAVATER'S WARNING.

Trust him little who doth raise
To the same height both great and small,
And sets the sacred crown of praise,
Smiling, on the head of all.

Trust him less who looks around
To censure all with scornful eyes,
And in everything has found
Something that he dare despise.

But for one who stands apart,
Stir'd by nought that can befall,
With a cold indifferent heart,
Trust him least and last of all.

THE FRIEND OF THE LIONS.

We are in the Studio of a friend of ours, whose knowledge of all kinds of Beasts and Birds has never been surpassed, and to whose profound acquaintance with the whole Animal Kingdom, every modern picture-gallery and every print-shop, at home and abroad, bears witness. We have been wanted by our friend as a model for a Rat-catcher. We feel much honored, and are sitting to him in that distinguished capacity, with an awful Bulldog much too near us.

Our friend is, as might be expected, the particular friend of the Lions in the Zoological Gardens, Regent's Park, London. On behalf of that Royal Family dear to his heart, he offers—standing painting away at his easel, with his own wonderful vigour and ease—a few words of friendly remonstrance to the Zoological Society.

You are an admirable society (says our friend, throwing in, now a bit of our head, and now a bit of the Bulldog's), and you have done wonders. You are a society that has established in England, a national menagerie of the most beautiful description, and that has placed it freely and in a spirit deserving of the highest commendation within the reach of the great body of the people. You are a society rendering a real service and advantage to the public, and always most sensibly and courteously represented by your excellent MITCHELL.

Then why (proceeds our friend), don't you treat your Lions better?

In the earnestness of his enquiry, our friend looks harder than usual at the Bulldog. The Bulldog immediately droops and becomes embarrassed. All dogs feel that our friend knows all their secrets, and that it is utterly hopeless to attempt to take him in. The last base action committed by this Bulldog is on his conscience, the moment our friend fixes him. “What? You did, eh?” says our friend to the Bulldog. The Bulldog licks his lips with the greatest nervousness,

winks his red eyes, balances himself afresh on his bandy forelegs, and becomes a spectacle of dejection. He is as little like his vagabond self, as that remarkable breed which the French call a *bouledogue*.

Your birds (says our friend, resuming his work, and addressing himself again to the Zoological Society), are as happy as the day is—he was about to add, long, but glances at the light and substitutes—short. Their natural habits are perfectly understood, their structure is well-considered, and they have nothing to desire. Pass from your birds to those members of your collection whom Mr. Rogers used to call, “our poor relations.” Of course I mean the monkeys. They have an artificial climate carefully prepared for them. They have the blessing of congenial society carefully secured to them. They are among their own tribes and connexions. They have shelves to skip upon, and pigeon-holes to creep into. Graceful ropes dangle from the upper beams of their sitting-rooms, by which they swing, for their own enjoyment, the fascination of the fair sex, and the instruction of the enquiring minds of the rising generation. Pass from our poor relations to that beast, the Hippopotamus—What do you mean?

The last enquiry is addressed, not to the Zoological Society, but to the Bulldog, who has deserted his position, and is sneaking away. Passing his brush into the left thumb on which he holds his palette, our friend leisurely walks up to the Bulldog, and slaps his face! Even we, whose faith is great, expect to see him next moment with the Bulldog hanging on to his nose; but, the Bulldog is abjectly polite, and would even wag his tail if it had not been bitten off in his infancy.

Pass, I was saying (coolly pursues our friend at his easel again), from our poor relations to that impersonation of sensuality, the Hippopotamus. How do you provide for him? Could he find, on the banks of the Nile, such a villa as you have built for him on the banks of the Regent’s canal? Could he find, in his native Egypt, an appropriately furnished drawing-room, study, bath, wash-house, and spacious pleasure-ground, all en suite, and always ready? I think not. Now, I beseech your managing committee and your natural philosophers, to come with me and look at the Lions.

Here, our friend seizes a piece of charcoal and instantly produces, on a new canvas standing on another easel near, a noble Lion and Lioness. The Bulldog (who deferentially resumed his position after having his face slapped), looks on in manifest uneasiness, lest this new proceeding should have something to do with him.

There! says our friend, throwing the charcoal away, There they are! The majestic King and Queen of quadrupeds. The British Lion is no longer a fictitious creature in the British coat of arms. You produce your

British Lion every year from this royal couple. And how, with all the vast amount of resources, knowledge, and experience at your command, how do you treat these your great attractions? From day to day, I find the noble creatures patiently wearing out their weary lives in narrow spaces where they have hardly room to turn, and condemned to face in the roughest weather a bitter Nor’-Westerly aspect. Look at those wonderfully-constructed feet, with their exquisite machinery for alighting from springs and leaps. What do you conceive to be the kind of ground to which those feet are, in the great foresight of Nature, least adapted? Bare, smooth, hard boards, perhaps, like the deck of a ship? Yes. A strange reason why you should choose that and no other flooring for their dens!

Why, Heaven preserve us! (cries our friend, frightening the Bulldog very much) do any of you keep a cat? Will any of you do me the favour to watch a cat in a field or garden, on a bright sunshiny day—how she crouches in the mould, rolls in the sand, basks in the grass, delights to vary the surface upon which she rests, and change the form of the substance upon which she takes her ease. Compare such surfaces and substances with the one uniform, unyielding, unnatural, unelastic, inappropriate piece of human carpentry upon which these beautiful animals, with their vexed faces, pace and repace, and pass each other two hundred and fifty times an hour.

It is really incomprehensible (our friend proceeds), in you who should be so well acquainted with animals, to call these boards—or that other uncomfortable boarded object like a Mangle with the inside taken out—a Bed, for creatures with these limbs and these habits. That, a Bed for a Lion and Lioness, which does not even give them a chance of being bruised in a new place? Learn of your cat again, and see how *she* goes to bed. Did you ever find her, or any living creature, go to bed, without re-arranging to the whim and sensation of the moment, the materials of the bed itself? Don’t you, the Zoological Society, punch and poke your pillows, and settle into suitable places in your beds? Consider then, what the discomfort of these magnificent brutes must be, to whom you leave no diversity of choice, no power of new arrangement, and as to whose unchanging and unyielding beds you begin with a form and substance that have no parallel in their natural lives. If you doubt the pain they must endure, go to museums and colleges where the bones of lions and other animals of the feline tribe who have lived in captivity under similar circumstances, are preserved; and you will find them thickly encrusted with a granulated substance, the result of long lying upon unnatural and uncomfortable planes.

I will not be so pressing as to the feeding of my Royal Friends (pursues the Master), but

even there I think you are wrong. You may rely upon it, that the best regulated families of Lions and Lionesses don't dine every day punctually at the same hour, in their natural state, and don't always keep the same kind and quantity of meat in the larder. However, I will readily waive that question of board, if you will only abandon the other.

The time of the sitting being out, our friend takes his palette from his thumb, lays it aside with his brush, ceases to address the Zoological Society, and releases the Bulldog and myself. Having occasion to look closely at the Bulldog's chest, he turns that model over as if he were made of clay (if I were to touch him with my little finger he would pin me instantly), and examines him without the smallest regard to his personal wishes or convenience. The Bulldog, having humbly submitted, is shown to the door.

"Eleven precisely, to-morrow," says our friend, "or it will be the worse for you." The Bulldog respectfully slouches out. Looking out of the window, I presently see him going across the garden, accompanied by a particularly ill-looking proprietor with a black eye—my prototype I presume—again a ferocious and audacious Bulldog, who will evidently kill some other dog before he gets home.

THE MANCHESTER STRIKE.

THERE can be no doubt that the judgment to be formed upon a strike among the operatives in a great factory district, if it is to be worth anything, must be based upon a more difficult chain of reasoning than usually goes to the consideration of irregularities in the appointed course of trade. Perfectly free competition regulates all prices, it is said; and, in most callings, regulates with certainty the price of labour. A self-adjusting power is introduced by it into the usual machinery of commerce. So far as regards labour, the working of it is that, as a rule, every man goes where he can get most value for such work as he can best perform; and every man who wants labour will, to the extent his capital allows, vie with his neighbours in attempting to secure to his service the best labour he can meet with of the sort he wants. That is the ordinary course of trade. Only the true price stands, and that price being the lowest by which men of average capabilities find that they can live, a poor trade entails secret hardships; middling trade a bare subsistence; and none but a very brisk trade affords chance of wealth. So it is with the price of skilled labour; but, with the price of unskilled labour, it is scarcely so. In each class of men possessing special capabilities, there is a given number only, and the aim of each of their employers is to do what he can towards securing for himself, out of that number, the best. For the absolutely un-

skilled, there can be no competition when a mass of the population, ignorant and in sore need, is pressing forward to receive a dole of such work as it can perform; or, if there be a competition, it is of an inverse kind—a struggle among thousands for the food of hundreds; each striving by the most desperate offer of cheap labour—sometimes even an hour's work for a farthing—to secure a portion of the necessary subsistence.

Skilled labour is, with but few exceptions, subject to an inevitable law, with which employer and employed alike must be content to bring their operations into harmony. But, with unskilled labour, the compulsion set on the employer is in no proportion to that set on the employed. Wages in that case are not regulated by a just regard to the fair relations between capital and labour; the question among competitors being not who shall, by paying most, attract the most efficient class of servants, and secure the heartiest assistance; but who shall, by paying least, take most advantage of the necessity of people who are struggling for the chance of only a few crumbs of the bread of independence. It thus becomes notorious enough how it is that cheap articles are produced out of the life-blood of our fellow-creatures. The evil can only be corrected now, by the direct interference of our consciences. Unwholesomely cheap production is a perversion of the common law of trade which will in course of time be blotted out by the advance of education; and there can never be in this country a glut of intelligence and skill, although we may soon have a glut of ignorance. Parallel with the advance of mind, there will run the advance of mind-work, and the diffusion of a right sense of its value will be increased.

Thus it will be seen, that while we believe with all our hearts in the wholesomeness of the great principle of free competition—regard nothing as so really helpful to the labourer, so sure to beget healthy trade and bring out all the powers of the men engaged in it—we do see that there is in society one class, and that a large one, upon which, when men look, they may believe that competition is an evil. The truth is, that the existence of that class, so helpless and so much neglected, is the evil to remove; but while it remains—as wholesome meat may kill a man with a disease upon him—there is an unsound body hurt by it, requiring, O political economist! spoon-meat and medicine, not the substantial bread and beef which doubtless theory can prove and experience affirm, to be the best of nourishment for human bodies. There are fevers among bodies politic as among bodies corporal, and we are disposed to think that half the difficulties opposed to a distinct and general perception of the truths which our economists have ascertained, depend upon the fact that they have not yet advanced—so to speak—from a just theory of nutrition to

the formation of a true system of therapeutics. That which will maintain health is not, necessarily, that which will restore it. Often it happens that a blister or a purge, though it would certainly make sound men sick, will make the sick man whole. May it not also be that what is ruinous to all sound trade shall hereafter come to be known as a social medicine possessed, in certain cases, of a healing power, and applicable therefore to some states of disordered system? We believe that a great many discrepancies of opinion may be reconciled by a view like this. Its justice is hardly to be questioned; although, as to the particular applications of it, there is room for any amount of discussion.

Thus, in the case of the Manchester strike, the workmen—though not of the unskilled class—may state that they are unable to feel the working of the principle of competition; that if they do not get what pay they like at one factory, they are not practically at liberty to get the value of their labour in another. Even the population of one mill, thrown out of work, is too large and too special, as to the nature of the various kinds of skill possessed among its people, to be able to find anything like prompt absorption into other factories; but as masters almost always act in groups for the determination of wages, it is the population, not of one mill, but that of five or six, that becomes discontented; and the best proof of the fact that it is practically unable to better itself even though higher wages may be given elsewhere is, that it does not better itself. There is a curious and decided variation in the rates of wages paid in various factories and manufacturing towns; variations artificially increased by strikes, but the existence of which shows, at any rate, to the satisfaction of the operatives, that rates may be arbitrary, and that the natural law does not work easily in their case which brings the price of any article to its just, uniform level. The Manchester masters point out to their men other masters who pay less than they pay; the operatives point on the other hand, to masters paying more. But it is not in their power to carry their own labour to those masters, as it ought to be, for a free working of the principle of competition. Mechanical and accidental difficulties stand completely in the way, and they are aggravated on both sides by habits of imperfect combination. It is just to state these difficulties, and to show that the instinct of the operative may not be altogether reprehensible when it suggests to him that against the worst uneasiness which he feels in the system to which he belongs, a blister or a blood-letting, in the shape of a strike, is the best remedy. He may be very wrong, as a man is apt to be wrong when doctoring himself. There is an excuse for his quackery in the fact that he has, at present, no physician to call in.

The difficulties of the case, as it is felt by employers and employed in our manufacturing districts, is aggravated, as we have said, by imperfect combinations; for, between the trades' unions and the masters' associations there is, in truth, a perfect unity of interest. They who reduce the master's capital, reduce his power of employing labour; they who wrong the labourer by whom they live, reduce his will and power to do work. At present, men and masters are in many cases combatants, because they never have been properly allies; they have not been content to feel that they are fellow-workers, that the man at the helm and the man at the oars are both in the same boat, and that the better they agree together, the more likely they will be to weather out a storm.

In the case of the existing strike at Manchester, we have read carefully the manifestoes, replies, and counter-replies that have been passing between the opposed bodies for the purpose of being laid before the public; and the fact made in them of all others most manifest is—that the points raised in them are points that ought to have been raised very many months ago; discussed and understood between the masters and the men before the strike, and for the prevention of the strike.

Upon the precise points in dispute we cannot undertake to give a definite opinion. From each party to the quarrel we get half a case, and the halves are not such as the public easily will know how to unite into a distinct whole. Rates of wages, as we have already said, do not appear to be uniform, and while the masters in Manchester desire, as we think, most fairly and properly, to bring a certain class of wages, raised unduly by strikes, to its just and natural rate, pointing to some other place in which the rate is low, the men point to a place where the rates are higher than at Manchester, and say, Come let us strike an average between the two. The offer is refused. It may be necessarily and wisely refused. There are evidently many accessory considerations that affect the nominal day's wages in this place and that. To the public out of Lancashire it cannot be explained fully by manifestoes. Between masters and men, if they were in any habit of maintaining a right mutual understanding it ought not to be possible that any controversy about them could be pushed to the extremity of open breach. The spinners on strike head one of their documents with the last words of Justice Talfourd: "If I were asked what is the greatest want in English society to mingle class with class, I would say in one word, the want of sympathy." Most true; but need we say that there is sympathy due from workmen towards employer, as well as from employer towards workmen? It is essential to a correction of the evil thus stated that the operative should either generously be the first to give up hostile prejudices, or

that at the least he should be altogether prompt to second, heart and soul, every attempt of the master to establish a relation of good-will and confidence with him. Men rarely quarrel except through what is wisely called—misunderstanding.

There is some reason that we will not undertake to give, which causes Lancashire, although by no means the only British factory district, to be the district most afflicted by misunderstandings. Nowhere else are the masters so much obstructed by the dictatorial spirit of the men; nowhere else is the law so much interfered with, by the dictatorial spirit of the masters. In Scotland, Yorkshire, and the west of England, masters and men work generally well together, and the law is more or less obeyed; machinery, for instance, not being, as a rule, obstinately left unfenced.

Many pages of this journal have been devoted already to the discouragement of strikes. We have urged invariably that the one perfect remedy against them is the opening up of more and better opportunities of understanding one another, between man and master. In case we may be supposed to be ignorant of the feelings about which we reason, let it be known that every thought—almost every word—upon this subject given in the paragraphs that follow will be the thought or word, not of a speculative person at a distance, but of a Lancashire mill-owner. At the time of the disastrous Preston strike, a Preston manufacturer, whose men stood by him honestly and well, published at Manchester, a little pamphlet;* which, if its counsel had been taken, would assuredly have made the present strike of Manchester impossible. Mr. Justice Tal-
fourd's last words, placed lately by the men above their manifesto, was then chosen as a motto by the masters. Coming, this gentleman wrote, into Lancashire from a district where good feeling subsisted between the employer and the employed, it was with the utmost surprise that he found labour and capital to be in a state of antagonism throughout the country. From the time when he first began to employ labour in Lancashire, more than a quarter of a century ago, he has made it his strict business to study the system at work around him, and discover the real causes of the evils that undoubtedly exist; and he has no hesitation in saying, that the main cause is a want of cordial feeling—the absence, in fact, of a good understanding between the parties to the labour-contract. This feeling must be established, he adds, or the case never will be mended. Such understanding does not come by any explanations from third parties; it is produced only by direct and habitual intercourse between the parties too often at issue. The Preston manufacturer says that

no doubt the masters in Lancashire help their men to be intelligent by spending money liberally upon schools connected directly or indirectly with their mills. Duty is done amply; and, for duty's sake, too, to children; but, he adds, what is really wanted is the education of the adult intellect. The minds of children, having been prepared by the rudiments of knowledge to receive ideas (whether good or evil), they are then cast adrift to gather and continue their education by absorbing all the notions, all the prejudices, and all the fallacies with which chance may surround them. A dispute arises; there is no sympathy shown to the operatives by the employers; but much real or pretended sympathy is shown by the delegates, who tell them fine-spun theories about the results of trades' unions; talk to them in an inflated manner about their rights and wrongs; tell them that a strike is the only way of battling for the right. Such men never interfere without widening the breach on which they get a footing.

So far, the Preston manufacturer says what we have felt and said on numerous occasions. Now let us see how he not only speaks, but acts, and how the doing looks which illustrates the saying.

In the first place, minor acts of friendship to the men may be mentioned:—He has encouraged them to form a Provident Club in connection with his mill, and given them all help in it that would not compromise their independence; at the same time he has encouraged them also to support the benefit clubs out of doors. He has liked them to be led to accumulate savings, never believing that a store of money in the operative's power would facilitate a strike, but rather knowing that the provident man who has saved property will be especially unwilling to see it dissipated. He has provided his men with a reading-room and a lending library, and secured a fund for its support, while he has removed a cause of soreness that exists in even well-regulated mills, by devoting to their library the fines levied upon operatives for faults of discipline. Such fines are necessary, and the faults for which they are imposed cost, of course, loss to the millowner for which they are no real compensation; nevertheless, if the master puts such shillings into his own pocket, or, as is sometimes the case, gives them as pocket-money to a son, experience declares that they are grudged, and sometimes counted as extortions. Let the fine go to the common account of the men, and the payer of it, instead of being pitied as the victim of a tyrant, will be laughed at—thanked for his donation to the library, and so forth. Practically, also, the result of this system, as the Preston manufacturer has found, is to reduce the number of the fines. Men would so much rather be victims than butts, that acts of neglect are more determinedly avoided, though we may suggest the

* Strikes Prevented. By a Preston Manufacturer. Galt and Co. 1854.

general good feeling in the mill as a much better reason for the greater care over the work.

Left to select, by a committee chosen from among themselves, the books to be placed in their library, the men have been found to prefer those which contained useful knowledge—such as manuals of popular science, voyages, and histories.

So much being done to promote among the adults increasing intelligence and good feeling, there remains the most essential thing, the corner-stone of the whole system. It has been the practice of this master to promote weekly discussion-meetings among the operatives in his employment. Topics of the day, opinions of the press, the state of trade, questions concerning competition, discoveries on practical science or mechanics, especially such as affect the cotton-trade; and, lastly, the conduct and discipline of their own mill, provide plenty of matter for the free play of opinion. The master takes every possible opportunity of being present at these meetings; and, from what he has heard in them concerning his own mill, the Preston manufacturer declares that he has derived substantial advantage. It will, very often, he says, happen that the men may fancy themselves to be suffering under a grievance which does not really exist, and which a very little explanation will at once remove. Sometimes, too, a real grievance may be in existence, which the employer needs only to be informed of to remedy. In some mills, this master adds,—such is the fear of the consequence of being thought a grumbler,—that the men will often draw lots to determine who shall be the bearer of a complaint which may have been long seeking expression.

With one extract we will sum up the result of the adoption of this system. "I confess," says the Preston manufacturer, "that, at the time, having control of a large establishment, I cultivated a habit of meeting and discussing questions with my workmen, both questions affecting the public concernment, and questions relating to our business. I confess that I derived quite as much benefit from these discussions as they did; and how much that was, may be inferred from the fact that, after the institution of that habit, I never had a dispute with my operatives. And I will here say that, at those meetings, I have heard an amount of sound and various information, expressed with a native strength and eloquence such as would have surprised any one not conversant with the Lancashire population. It was from those meetings that I derived the settled conviction which I now entertain, that the operatives do not lack the power, but only the means, of forming sound and independent opinions."

We believe that we employ ourselves more usefully at this juncture in setting forth general principles like these than in any attempt, by arbitration as third parties in a

special case, to introduce that which the Preston manufacturer declares to be only a fresh element of discord.

THE HALL OF WINES.

If you mount the Belvedere of the Jardin des Plantes, at Paris, there is one particular segment of the panorama which forms a very complete and singular picture. The right-hand wing (theatrically speaking) is formed by Jussieu's famous cedar of Lebanon, planted by his own hands in seventeen hundred and thirty-five; that on the left hand is a clump of yews, firs, and miscellaneous evergreens. The heights of Montmartre crown the horizon; the middle distance is formed by the line of houses that constitute the quays on the right bank of the Seine, broken in the midst by the cupolas of St. Pol, and a little to the left by the barn-like roof of St. Louis dans l'île. But the whole central space of the landscape is overspread with what might be a lake of brown mud in a half-dried and crumpled state, but which, after a second look, proves a vast expanse of tiled roofs running in parallel rows, and slightly diversified by the tops of trees and by scarcely visible skylights which break up the gray-brown uniformity. That petrified mud-lake consists entirely of the roofs which cover the famous Entrepôt or Halle-aux-Vins, which Napoleon the First propounded (by imperial decree) in eighteen hundred and eight, on the site of the Abbey of St. Victor, where Abelard had listened to the lessons of Guillaume de Champeaux, and where many good bottles of ecclesiastical wine had made their disappearance down monkish throats.

If your curiosity is sufficiently awakened to pay the Entrepôt a nearer visit, you will meet with much to interest. Suppose you walk down Rue Cuvier,—perhaps one of these days we shall have Owen Street, and Faraday Street, in London,—you will reach the Quai Saint Bernard, with the Seine rushing rapidly to the left and in front. You will encounter an eddying stream of pleasure and of business combined, as if the whole population of Paris were dancing a grand Sir Roger de Coverly together; omnibusses flitting backwards and forwards,—Hirondelles, Favorites, Gazelles, Parisiennes; holiday parties laden with eatables, to be washed down, outside the Barrière, by wine untaxed by octroi duty; students and savans bent on taking notes on botany and comparative anatomy; wine merchants and their customers with mouths in tasting trim, bound either for the Halle itself or for Bercy beyond it; troops of children with their nurses and grandmothers, about to spend the afternoon in watching the monkeys; artisans' cousins from the interior, with hearts palpitating at the hope of beholding living lions, tigers and boa-con-

strictors, for the first time in their life ; not to mention the man who cuts your portrait in black paper, with the Arab who jumps into the air like a goat and lights on his fore-feet like a sportive tomcat, on their way to compete with the giantess, the learned pig, and the fortune-telling pony at the foot of the bridge of Austerlitz. From all these mundane follies the Halle-aux-Vins is secluded, in monastic style, by a light railing covered with stout iron network, which allows it to gaze at the Vanity Fair, while it separates it from too familiar contact with the world. It is in the crowd—without being of it—a convenient, friar-like, differenceless distinction. Exclusiveness, however, of whatever kind, is more apparent than real. At the bottom of Rue Cuvier, turn to your right, and you may enter at once, unless you prefer walking along the Quai to the principal entrance, where there is a letter-box, in case you have a billet-doux to post. The principal restriction imposed upon a stranger is, that he is forbidden to smoke amongst the eaux-de-vie.

Well, now that you are inside it, what do you think of it ? Is the wine-market of Paris like any thing else ? The name of the establishment puts the London Docks into your head ; but, beyond their commercial use and distinction, there is no more analogy between the London Docks, and this little bit of fairy-land, than there was between the caverns of *Ætna*, where *Vulcan* made pokers and tongs, and the slopes of *Parnassus* where the Muses danced. The Halle-aux-Vins is not a building, nor a labyrinthine cellar ; it is a complete town, as perfect and unique in its way as *Pompeii* itself. Once a week, indeed, it resembles the city of the dead ; it is silent, solitary, and closed. No business is transacted there on Sundays, save only by the restless spirits which will work unseen, and which contrive to make their escape invisibly, however fast they may be imprisoned.

The Halle is the very concentration and impersonation of French vinous hilarity. It would not do for port and sherry, which require a more solid and stately residence ; nor is it sufficiently whimsical and mediæval to serve as a rendezvous for Rhenish, Austrian, and Hungarian volunteers in the grand army of *Jean Raisin*. *Rudesheimer*, *Voeslan*, *Gumpoldskirchen*, or *Luttenberg*, could not well sojourn comfortably in any place that had not a touch of a ruined castle in its architecture. But the *Entrepôt*, whose first stone was laid little more than forty years back, no more pretends to an elderly and dignified mien than does the *Bal Mabille* (by daylight) or the *Château des Fleurs*. It is as tasteful and as elegant as if intended to serve as a suburban luncheon-place, where you might call for any known wine in the world, to be sipped under the shade of flowering shrubs, to the accompaniment of

sandwiches, sausage-rolls, and ices, handed to you by white-aproned waiters or rosy-cheeked and smart-capped damsels.

Great part of this town consists of houses—summer-houses, dolls-houses,—of one story, with one door, one window, and one chimney ; with room in each, for exactly one more than one inmate. An extra apartment is sometimes contrived, by means of a bower, which serves instead of a garden—there is none—though a great deal of gardening is done in the Halle, in tubs, flower-pots, and mignonette-boxes, wherein luxuriant specimens of the culture are observable ; myrtles, oleanders, lilacs, orange-trees, bay-trees, and pomegranates, all a-growing and a-blowing. Favoured mansions possess a garden—sometimes as much as three or four mètres square—bedecked with roses, dwarf and standard, lilies of the valley, violets double and single, irises displaying some of the colours of the rainbow, hollyhocks, gilliflowers, blue-bells, and oyster-shells all in a row. There is an abundant supply of excellent water ; of course to serve no other purpose whatever than the refreshment of the aforesaid favourites of *Flora*, though people say more wine is drunk in Paris than ever comes or came into it.

The Halle-aux-Vins houses, which put you in mind of *Gulliver's* box in *Brodingnag*, are raised from the ground on separate blocks of stone, to keep them dry, which suggests the further idea of the possibility of their being flown away with by an eagle or roc, if they had only a convenient ring in the roof. Of course, the houselings,—detached and separate ; no quarrelling with next-door neighbours, nor listening to secrets through thin partition walls,—are ranged in streets, the perusal of whose simple names is sufficient to create a vinous thirst. What do you say to walking out of *Rue de Bordeaux* into *Rue de Champagne*, thence traversing *Rue de Bourgogne*, to reach *Rue de la Côte-d'Or*, and *Rue de Languedoc*, before arriving at *Rue de Touraine* ! The *Barmecide's* guest would have been in ecstasies, in defiance of the *koran*, at such a feast.

Moreover, to make things still more pleasant, every one of the euphonious alleys and streets is planted with trees of different ornamental species,—the lime, the horse-chestnut, and other arboreal luxuries. It is a pity that the climate does not permit the growth of cork-trees, bearing crops of ready-cut corks, including bungs, long clarets, and champagne-stoppers. The happy mortal to whom each little lodge belongs, is indicated by a legible inscription giving not only the number of his isolated square counting-house, according to its place in the alley which it lines, whether in single or in double row, but also bearing the town-address of its tenant, and specifying the special liquors in which he deals ; thus :—“21, *Mossenet, Senior, & Cie.* ; *Quai d'Anjou*, 25. Fine wines of

the Côte-d'Or cellar, Rue de Champagne, 17." Similar biographical sketches are given of other lords of other summer-houses which wink at you with their venetian blinds behind their fences of trelliswork covered with creeping plants.

The ground-plan of the Halle-aux-Vins is formed of square blocks, consisting of magazines, divided at right angles by the streets we have traversed. The magazines are appropriately named after the rivers of France along whose banks are the most famous vineyards. The Magazia du Rhone, Magasin de L'Yonne, Magasin de la Marne, Magasin de la Seine, and Magasin de la Loire, will serve as guides to the nomenclature of the rest of the establishment. Five principal masses of building are thus divided by clean-swept streets, whose most conspicuous ornaments, besides the little thrifty fir-trees, arbor-vitæ, and junipers in tubs, are groups of all sorts of casks lying about in picturesque attitudes, as if they had purposely arranged themselves in tableaux for the sake of having their portraits drawn; and drays, which are simply long-inclined planes balancing on the axle of the wheel, on which the casks are held by a rope tightened by a four-handled capstan. The elevation of the Halle-aux-Vins is pyramidal in principle. The ground-floor of the blocks is crossed by galleries from which you enter cobwebby rather than mouldy cellars, whose more apt denomination would be the Bordeaux word *chais*. Each gallery, a sort of rectangular tunnel some three hundred and fifty metres long, is lighted by the sunshine from a grating above, and is traversed by a wooden railway for tubs to roll on straight and soberly. Great precautions are taken against fire. The galleries are closed at each end by double doors of iron grating. The sapeurs pompiers, in various ways, make their vicinity if not their presence felt.

Other storehouses, built over the ground-floor so as to form a second story, are tastefully surrounded with terraces, on which you are strictly forbidden to smoke. These upper magazines are approached from the streets by inclined planes of road-way for the use of vehicles; pedestrians, by stepping up light iron staircases, may more readily breathe the air of the terrace, while sounds of tapping and wine-coopering mingle with the hum of the adjacent city, with the passing music of some military band, or with the roar and the scream of the captive creatures which are stared at by the crowd in the Jardin des Plantes. Vinous and spirituous smells float in the atmosphere from the full casks which lie about, in spite of the coating of plaster with which their ends are covered; and we draw nigh to the vaulted magazines of eau de vie, where every brandy-seller has his own proper numbered store, lighted from above by little square skylights, and where roam groups of inquisitive tasters, or spirit-rappers, anxious to pry into secrets

that are closely veiled from the vulgar herd. The sanctum of the shrine is the *Depotoir Public*, or public gauging and mixing apparatus of cylindrical receivers, and glass-graduated brandyometers, and cranes for raising the barrels to the top of the cylinders. In this presence-chamber of alcoholic majesty, etiquette is strictly observed. Conformably with the rules and regulations of the *Entrepôt*, the conservator apprises Messieurs the merchants that they are required to mind their P's and Q's. It is no more allowable to meddle with the machinery, or to intrude behind the mystic cylinders, than it is to make playthings of the furniture which adorns the altar of a cathedral.

There are paradoxical facts connected with the Halle-aux-Vins which none but the thoroughly initiated can solve. Perhaps it may afford a clue to know that there are two emporia of wine and spirit at Paris; one, the Halle within the *barrière*, and, therefore subject to the octroi tax, and more immediately connected with the supply of the city itself—the other, Bercy, close by, but outside the *barrière*, and consequently filled with the goods yet untouched by the troublesome impost. Large as it is, the *Entrepôt* is not large enough; were it twice as big, it would all be hired. For, of all trades in Paris, the wine-trade is the most considerable. There are now nearly seven hundred wholesale merchants, and about three thousand five hundred retail dealers, without reckoning the *épiciers*, or grocers, who usually sell wines, spirits, and liqueurs in bottle; taking no account of the innumerable houses where they give to eat, and also give to drink. Not only is it the mission of Parisian commerce to moisten the throats of the metropolis, but it is the natural intermediary of the alcoholic beverages that are consumed in the vineyardless districts of France. The twentieth part of the produce of the empire travels to Paris. But, as the imposts on their arrival are very heavy and moreover press only on the local consumption, means have been taken to store the merchandise in such a way as not to pay the duty till the moment of its sale to the consumer. Hence, there is established on the bank of the Seine where Bercy stands, an assemblage of a thousand or twelve hundred cellars and warehouses—a sort of inland bonding-place—outside the limits of the octroi tax. These are hired by the merchants of the city as receptacles for their stock in hand.

The buildings of the Halle-aux-Vins, within the fiscal boundary, cost altogether thirty millions of francs, estimating the value of the site at one third of that sum. The speculation, however, has not hitherto responded to the hopes that were entertained at the time when it was founded. Whether the rentals (which vary from two francs and a half to five francs the superficial *mètre*), are

fixed at too low a figure, or whether the wine-merchants, disliking to be watched and hindered in the performance of their trade manipulations, prefer their private magazines at Bercy, the Entrepôt brings in to the city of Paris no more than three hundred thousand francs clear a year, that is, about one per cent for the capital employed. That Jean Raisin is somewhere made the subject of certain mystic rites which are scrupulously screened from public observation may be proved by the simple rules of addition and subtraction.

The wine-trade of Paris amounts to two million two hundred thousand hectolitres; four hundred thousand are consumed in the banlieue, outside the barrière, and seven hundred thousand are sent away, to supply the northern departments. What then becomes of the one million one hundred thousand which are left at Paris? It is made into one million four hundred thousand hectolitres! It may be calculated from the price at the vineyard, the carriage, the taxes, and other etceteras, that unadulterated wine, of however inferior a quality, cannot be sold in Paris for less than half a franc, or fifty centimes, the litre. Now, for considerable quantities retailed in cabarets, the price is as low as forty centimes. The equilibrium is re-established by clandestine and fraudulent manufacture. On ordinary common wines it is practised to the extent of increasing them on the average as much as three-tenths. Various sweet ingredients are fermented in water. A farmer travelling from Orleans in the same railway carriage with myself, showed me without the slightest hesitation, or concealment, a sample of dried pears which he was taking to Paris to sell to the Bercy wine-brewers. Very inferior raisins, dried fruits in general, and coarse brown sugar, enter into the magic broth. To complete the charm, an addition is made of some high-coloured wine from the south, a little alcohol, and a dash of vinegar and tartaric acid. Such preparations as these are harmless enough; they become grateful to the palate that is habituated to them; and certain adroit manipulators succeed in producing a beverage which attains considerable reputation amongst a wide circle of amateurs. Certainly the so-called petit Macon you get at Paris is a most agreeable drink, when good of its kind. At respectable restaurants, drinking it from a sealed bottle, you may reckon with tolerable safety on its genuineness. In wine shops, where wine is drunk from the cask, its purity is not so certain. The great test is, that manufactured and even light wines will not keep; they must be consumed, like a glass of soda water, as soon as they are ready for the lip. It is said that the lamented Fum the Fourth had a bin of choice wine which he would allow no one to taste, except on special occasions when he chose to call for it himself. But a king, however low he may descend, can hardly go down the

cellar-steps with a bunch of keys in one hand and a tallow candle in the other, to decant his own favourite port and sherry. One morning, his Majesty decided that the evening's feast should be graced by the appearance of some of the treasured nectar. Of course, the underlings had drunk it all themselves, except a single bottle, which they had the marvellous modesty to leave. What was to be done? A panting cupbearer was sent with the final remnant to procure from a confidential purveyor to the palace something as nearly like it as possible. "You shall have it by dinner-time," said the friend in need; "and by letting me know any morning, you may have more to any extent you want. But," said the benevolent wizard, in tones of warning—"but, remember, it must be all consumed the same night. It will not keep till next day."

I hope the impromptu wine-maker was duly careful of the royal health. But in Paris there are said to be a number of cabaretiers, who, from the lees of wine mixed with a decoction of prunes doctored with logwood, sugar of lead, sugar, and eau-de-vie, metamorphose wholesome fountain-water into an infamous potion, which they shamelessly sell as the juice of the grape. The French Encyclopédie, in its article "Vin," gives a large number of serviceable receipts, which may or may not have been tested at Bercy. If effectual, their value is beyond all price. An elixir to improve instantly the most common wine; A mode of giving to the wine of the worst soil the best quality and the most agreeable taste; A mode of giving to ordinary wines the flavour of Malmsey, Muscat, Alicant, and sherry; The manner of knowing whether there be water in the wine; The means of restoring wine that is changed; Remarks on bottles which spoil the wine; and, The method of improving and clarifying all sorts of wines, whether new or old; would alone be quite sufficient to make the fortune of any man who could scrape a hundred francs together, and with that immense capital start as Parisian wine-merchant. The particulars of these prescriptions are unnecessary for the reader, especially, seeing that I have given him the reference; but I cannot resist transferring for his edification, from L'Editeur, an Oran (Algerian) newspaper for the eighth of November last, an advertisement, giving real names relative to the Liqueur Trasforest, of Bourdeaux:—

"This precious composition, very advantageously known for a long time past, and recently brought to perfection by its author, gives to wine of the most inferior crûs a delicious richness, which is easily confounded with the true richness of the Médoc; consequently, it is well appreciated by connoisseurs, who give it the preference over all preparations of this nature. Messieurs the proprietors, merchants, and consumers, who

have not yet employed it, are invited to make a trial of it; there is no doubt as to their being convinced of its excellent properties by the advantages they will derive from it, especially to consignments to beyond the seas. [Much obliged to the philanthropic House of Trasforest.] A great number of retail dealers owe the preference which they enjoy, to this aromatic liquor, which is an agent proper for the preservation of wine, at the same time that it imparts to it a very superior quality and value by the delicate bouquet which it communicates.

"To employ the Liqueur Trasforest properly, you ought in the first place to whip up the wine; let it remain about fifteen days; and not add the Liqueur until the wine is drawn off, so that its mixture with the wine may be perfect. After several days of rest it may be put in bottle; the aroma keeps indefinitely. [That may mean for an indefinitely short period.] Twenty years' experience and success prove that the high reputation of this excellent production is incontestably merited. A flask suffices to perfume, bonify, and age, a hogshead (barrique) of wine. Price one franc fifty centimes. An allowance of twenty per cent. to wholesale dealers. Orders attended to for ready-money payment. Beware of imitations.

"General entrepôt and special manufacture: Maison Trasforest, Rue Dauphine, 35, and Rue Saint-Martin, 56, opposite the Cours d'Albrest, Bourdeaux. (Prepay orders and their answers.) Sole dépôt in Oran at the office of the journal L'Editeur. At the same dépôt may be had the Gelatinous Powder, for the complete, absolute, and instantaneous clarification of white and red wines, vinegars, eaux-de-vie, and liqueurs."

THREE WIVES.

I HAVE besides my town residence in Cecil Street—which is confined to a suite of two apartments on the second-floor—a very pleasant country-house belonging to a friend of mine in Devonshire; this latter is my favourite seat, and the abode which I prefer to call my home. I like it well when its encircling glens are loud with rooks, and their great nests are being set up high in the rocking branches; I like it when the butterflies, those courtly ushers of the summer, are doing their noiseless mission in its southern garden, or on the shaven lawn before its front; I like it when its balustraded roof looks down upon a sea of golden corn and islands of green orchards flushed with fruit; but most it pleases me when logs are roaring in its mighty chimneys, and Christmas time is come. Six abreast the witches might ride up them, let their broomsticks prance and curvet as they would. If you entered the hall by the great doors while Robert Chetwood and myself were at our game of billiards at its further end, you could not recognise our features.

The galleries are studies of perspective, and the bare, shining staircases as broad as carriage ways. The library, set round from the thick carpet to the sculptured ceiling with ancient books, with brazen clasps, and old-world types, and worm-drilled bindings. The chapel, with its blazoned saints on the dim windows, and the mighty corridors with floors of oak and sides of tapestry, are pictures of the past, and teach whole chapters of the book of history: Red Rose and White Rose, Cavalier and Roundhead, Papist and Protestant, Orangeman and Jacobite have each had their day in Old Tremadyn House. When the great doors slam together, as they sometimes will, to the inexpressible terror of the London butler, they awake a series of thunderclaps which roll from basement to garret: many a warning have they given, in the good old times, to Tremadyns hiding for their lives, and many an arras has been raised and mirror slipped to right or left at that menacing sound. To this day, Robert Chetwood often comes anew upon some hold in which those who ruled before him have skulked—sometimes in his own reception-rooms, but more commonly in the great chambers where he puts his guests. These chambers are colossal, with huge carved pillars bearing up a firmament of needlework, and dressing-closets large enough for dining-rooms. Every person of note who could or could not by possibility of date or circumstance have slept therein have had the credit of passing a night within Tremadyn House, from the Wandering Jew, Shakespeare, Queen Elizabeth, down to Charles the First, Peter the Great, and the late Emperor Nicholas. There has been more than one murder in the Red room, several suicides in the Blue, and one ghost still haunts those spots in expiation. Tremadyns in lace cuffs and wigs; in scarlet and ermine; in armour from top to toe, line both the galleries—sold by the last Charles Surface of a dissolute race for ten pounds ten shillings a head. One great Tremadyn dynasty has passed away; Robert Chetwood, late banker in the City of London, not so long ago banker's clerk, now reigneth in their stead. The Tremadyns came in at the time of the siege of Jericho, or thereabouts, and the Chetwoods about ten years before the siege of Sebastopol; but there the advantage ceases. There is no man kinder to the poor, no man more courteous to all men, no man, whatever his quarterings, in all Devonshire with a better heart than Robert Chetwood. Tremadyn House is open to the county, as it ever was, and his old London friends are not forgotten; a hale and hearty gentleman indeed he is, but he has had many troubles; he is as happy as any man bereaved of children can be, and it was the loss of them that made him buy the house and give up his old haunts and busy way—He saw the nursery windows wide open to the air, But the faces of the children they were no longer there;

and that, wherever it may be, is too sad a sight to look upon.

But what a wife the old man had, to make up, as it seemed even to me, for all ! I say to me, for one of those lost children, a maiden of seventeen, was my betrothed bride—the gentlest and most gracious creature eyes ever looked upon ; I think if I could write my thoughts of her, I should move those to tears who never saw her face, when they read “Gertrude died.” She gave herself to me : the old man never could have given her. I say no more.

This is why Tremadyn House has become to me a home. It pleases Robert Chetwood to have his friend’s son with him, above all, because he was his daughter’s plighted husband, and my father’s friend is trebly dear to me as Gertrude’s father. When the Christmas party has dispersed, and the great house is quite emptied of its score of guests, I still remain with the old couple over the new year. They call me son, as though I were their son, and I call them my parents. If Heaven had willed it so, dear Gertrude and myself could not have hoped for greater wedded happiness, more love between us, than is between those two. “Perhaps,” he says, with a smile I never saw a young man wear, “perhaps it is that my old eyes are getting dim and untrustworthy, but Charlotte seems to me the dearest and most pleasant-looking dame in all the world.” And his wife makes answer that her sight also is just as little to be depended on. To each of them has come the silver hair, and the reverence with it that alone makes it beautiful ; and if their steps are slower than in youth, it is not because their hearts are heavier ; they are indeed of those, so rare ones, who make us in love with life down even to its close. They always seemed to me as having climbed the hill together their whole lives long, and never was I more astonished than upon this new year’s eve, when, Mrs. Chetwood being with us two in after-dinner talk, as custom was when all her guests were gone, her husband told this history. He had always talked quite openly to me,

A pair of friends, though I was young,
And Robert, seventy-two ;

and then, at the end of another year of love and confidence, I could not resist inquiring of them how long they two had been one.

“Well, on my word, George,” said the dear old lady, “you should be more discreet than to ask such questions.”

But her husband answered readily :

“This thirty years. I’ve been a married man myself this half-a-century.”

“Why, you don’t mean to say——” said I.

“Yes, I do,” he interrupted. “Of course I do. Charlotte has been my wife too long, I hope, to be jealous now of either Kate or Mary ; but I loved them each in turn

almost as dearly as I love her. Charlotte,” he added, turning towards her as she sat in the great arm-chair, “you don’t mind George being told about my other two wives, do you ?”

“I don’t mind your talking of Mary much,” she answered, “but get over that young Kate’s story as quickly as you can, please.”

And I really thought I detected a blush come over her dear old face while she was speaking.

“It is rather less than half a century ago,” he began, “since I first set foot in this beautiful Devon county. I came down on a short holiday from London, in the summer time, to fish, and I brought with me, besides my rod and basket, a portmanteau full of clothes and about twenty-five pounds in gold, which was the whole amount of my savings. I was junior clerk in a house at that day, with one hundred and twenty pounds a-year, and with as much chance of becoming a partner as you, my dear briefless Charles, have of sitting on the woolstack. From the top of Tremadyn House I could point you out the farm-house where I lodged, and will some day take you to see it,—a mighty homestead, with a huge portico of stone and flights of stone steps leading to the upper chambers from without. On one side was the farm-yard, filled with swine and poultry, with open stalls for cattle, and enormous barns, not so well kept or neat, perhaps, as the present day requires, but a perfect picture of plenty ; on the other stood the cider-presses, and beyond, the apple orchards, white with promise, red with fruit, made the air faint with fragrance ; half orchard was the garden, too, in fruit, through which, beneath a rustic bridge, my trout stream wandered. Charlotte, you know the place—have I not painted it ?”

“You have, Robert,” she said. The tears were in her eyes, ready to fall, I saw.

“There, then, I met Katie. The good man of the house was childless, and she, his cousin, was well cared for as his child. It was no wonder, George : the dark oak parlour seemed to need no light when she shone in it. Like a sunbeam gliding over common places, whatever household matters busied her she graced. Some sweet art seemed to lie in her, superior to mere neatness, as high-heartedness excelleth pride. I put on salmon flies to catch trout. I often fished without any hook at all. I strove to image her fair face and form in the clear waters, by the side of that hapless similitude of myself—the reflex of a forlorn youth in his first love. I did my best at hay-making to please her. I took eternal lessons in the art of making Devon cheese. I got at last so far as to kiss her hand. I drew a little, and she sat to me for her portrait. We sallied out a mushrooming and getting wild flowers, and on our way sang pleasant songs together, and interchanged our little stores

of reading. On the eve before my long put-off departure we were thus roaming: we had to cross a hundred stiles—the choicest blessings of this country I used to think them—and once, instead of offering my hand to help her over, I held out both my arms, and, upon my life, George, the dear girl jumped right into them; and that was how I got to kiss her cheek.”

“What shocking stories you are telling, Robert,” said Mrs. Chetwood, and certainly she was then blushing up under her lace cap to her white hair.

“Well, my dear, nobody was there except Kate and myself, and I think I must know what happened, at least as well as you do: so,” he continued, “after one more visit to the farm-house, Kate and I were married; she gave up all her healthy ways and country pleasures to come and live with me in the busy town; studious of others’ happiness, careful for others’ pain; at all times forgetful of herself: active and diligent, she had ever leisure for a pleasant word and a kind action; and for beauty, no maid nor wife in the world was fit, I believe, to compare with her; to you, George, who knew and loved our dearest Gertrude, I need not describe her mother. She was not long with me, but it soon seemed as if it must have cost my life to have parted with her; yet the girlish glory faded, and the sparkling spirit fled, and the day has been forgiven, though forgotten never, which took my darling Katie from my side.”

The old man paused a little here. Mrs. Chetwood kissed him softly upon the cheek.

“My second wife,” he resumed, “was not so young, and certainly had not the outward graces of my first. She was beautiful, too, in the flower as Kate was in the bud; her face had not the vivacity, nor her eyes the dancing light of Katie’s, but there sat such a serenity upon her features, as we sometimes see upon a lovely landscape when the sun is near its setting; a look which no man ever tires of; and Mary bore me children, and then, much as I had loved the sapling, it seemed to me that the full-fruited tree was dearer yet. She was no country girl from the Devon dales, but a town lady, bred. I had a great house by that time, with all things fitting about me, and my sphere was hers. The pearls suited her pleasant brow, and crowned her still raven tresses as becomingly as the single rose in her hair had adorned simple Kate. I think, if I may say so without ingratitude for my present great happiness, and with the leave of my dear Charlotte, that the happiest hours of my life were spent during those days, when our two children’s voices rang cheerily over the house, and some little scheme of pleasure for them was my every-

day desire and Mary’s. Even at the terrible time when boy and girl were being taken from us at once, never did their patient mother seem more dear to me; from when the hush of sickness stole upon us at first, to the day when that white procession left our doors, what a healing spirit was she! When we thought that the thickly folded veil of sorrow had fallen over us for ever, how tenderly she put it aside!

“It must needs have happened that my speech has here been melancholy, but indeed I should not speak of Mary so. She was the blithest, cheerfullest, most comfortable middle-aged wife that man ever had; behind our very darkest trouble a smile was always lying ready to struggle through it, and what a light it shed! One of your resigned immovable females, who accept every blessing as a temptation, and submit, with precisely the same feelings to what they call every chastening, would have killed me in a week. George, my Mary acted at all times according to her nature, and that nature was as beautiful and blessed as ever fell to the lot of womankind. You might well think that Kate and Mary were two prizes great enough for one man to draw out of the marriage lottery, and yet I drew another. When I lost my beloved Mary, my third wife took her place in my inmost heart.

“Kiss me, Charlotte,” said the old man, tenderly, and again she kissed him on the cheek. “And now,” continued he, “let us fill our glasses, for the New Year is coming on apace; and please to drink to the memory of my two wives, and to the health of her who is still left to me. The two first toasts must necessarily be somewhat painful to my dear Charlotte, and we will, therefore, receive them in silence, but the third we must drink with all the honours.”

So after those, he stood up, glass in hand; and said to her,

“Kate, Mary, Charlotte,—bride, matron, and dame in one, to whom I have been wedded this half-century,—for I have had no other wife, George,—God bless you, dear old heart! We have had a merry Christmas, as we have ever had, and I trust it may be permitted to us to have, still together, one more happy New Year. Hip! hip! hip! Hurrah!” and the echoes of our three times three seemed cheerily to roam all night about Tremadyn House.

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THE SULINA MOUTH OF THE DANUBE.

It was November, and the morrow of our arrival at Sulina dawned a dreary, sunless day, rather cold. We spent it waiting for the boat, which was due from Constantinople. Our pilot, however, surmised that there had been bad weather for many days in the Black Sea, and that no captain in the service of the Austrian Lloyd's would have ventured to pass the Bosphorus while it lasted. The pilot was a dark, sharp-featured, timorous Greek, of about forty years of age. His name was Birbantaki, a name of high account in every port of the Euxine.

So the long and the short Austrian officer—part of our company from Galatz*—very sensibly went out snipe-shooting. They were joined by the Greek consul; who, having no house here, is living on board one of the Danube Company's vessels, called the *Metternich*. That consul is driving a very brisk business; for, from the masts of six hundred of the thousand ships detained here by stress of weather, fluttered the gay colours of King Otho. Also, with the shooting-party, goes the agent of the Lloyd Company; a pleasant and influential gentleman, very popular about here. It is said he had five thousand pounds' worth of property—the hard savings of many thrifty years—destroyed by us. If this be true I shall be surprised to learn it is considered by the authorities as one of the inevitable private wrongs which are wrought by all wars. I cannot quite admit such reasoning, however; for surely, this person is as much entitled to a fair indemnity for the loss of his property, as were the owners of the British merchantman destroyed by the Russians at Sinope. By the way, also, what with Count Zamoiski and Colonel Turr, as well as such little episodes as the agent's affair, have we not been playing a very strange little game with Austria? Not to put too fine a point upon it, may I be bold enough to hint that we have been soliciting her alliance while slyly tweaking her nose? I wish, sometimes, that our good folks in authority had taken riper counsel in these matters; for we have made many needless and many very bitter enmities. When the shoot-

ing party return, therefore, I am not at all surprised to see a Russian officer with them. He is a common-looking-man; awkward, dirty, and, seemingly, of no social importance; but, as he comes on board, two Levantines seize eagerly on an opportunity of offering a loud insult to an Englishman, and then strut, blustering and bowing to the Muscovite, after the manner of their kind.

Mechanically marking these things, and hearing that there was no chance of our departure that day, I determined to go on shore, and visit all that avenging fires have left of Sulina. In truth, our prospect from the steamer was not very cheering. A large timber raft lay alongside us, with a log hut upon it; where its mouldy, amphibious guardians lived. They appeared to be always drying the same pair of calico drawers, on the same stick. Round and round this raft constantly paddled a froggy-looking fellow, seated in a small canoe roughly hewn out of the trunk of a tree. His business was to see that none of the timber drifted away, or was stolen. He was also employed as a sort of messenger, going to and fro among the ships. He used his single paddle—shaped something like a spade—with great skill. Our chief occupation was drowsily watching him. We saw also flocks of wild fowl in great numbers, flying almost out of sight in the air, and a few gulls, which perched, from time to time, about our rigging in the most friendly manner. The only objects of interest were a few Russian boats, fluttering about the harbour. In them sat Cossacks with hessian boots, red breeches, and small red turban-shaped peakless caps. They were the rude troops of the frontier; clumsy, leaden-faced fellows, who seem to have grown bloated and unhealthy in the air of the marshes. I was glad to land, if only for a change.

Sulina is a wretched place. Russia has ruined it, to build up the trade of Odessa; although it is naturally, perhaps, one of the happiest commercial sites in the world—the natural outlet of Germany and the rich corn-lands of the Principalities. So, the shore, which should be splendid with merchant palaces and populous with busy men from every nation, has been purposely rendered the very abomination of desolation. I

* See "The Show Officer," page 23, of the present volume.

say purposely, giving ear to a report current among all sailors in these seas. When the Russian government was reproached with a direct breach of faith in virtually blockading the mouth of the Danube during nine months of the year, they took their own way of clearing themselves from the imputation. It was eminently Russian. A great fuss was made: men and machines were furiously employed to remove the obstructions; but everything that was cleared out on one day, was scrupulously replaced on the next.

The state of the Sulina mouth of the Danube therefore, remains a most notable scandal. Vessels can only get over the bar when lightened of their cargoes, and are subject to all manner of official hindrance and fiscal extortion. They are sometimes detained a whole winter, to the serious loss of owners, to the stoppage of trade, to the increase of the price of food; also to the grave injury of the Moldo-Wallachian ports of Galatz and Ibraila, and the comparative ruin of the navigation of the whole Danube. Wrecks are awfully numerous; the loss of life, appalling, as I had after opportunities of observing.

Sulina is, at this time, a miserable collection of huts hastily run up to meet the pressing exigencies of the moment, being mere temporary erections of dried reeds. Their interiors—of which I visited several—presented no incorrect idea of the very extreme of discomfort in this raw damp climate. In some huts were haggard grisly men asleep, after an ague fit; and withered women, like the dried figs of a bad season with respect to personal appearance, cowering over their smoky fires, and grumbling as they cooked their unsavoury meals, or tore damp sticks for fuel. They had seldom any furniture besides an earthenware pan, or a black pot to stew their food. They had also generally a mat of rushes, dried or undried as the case might be, to sleep on; and they made fires on the bare earth outside their hovels. The central streets—mere muddy lanes—were choked up with sailors; among them, plenty of bad truculent Greeks from the Pirate Islands, seated before the doors of dram booths, gambling with filthy cards, and swearing canting oaths in the pauses of their sneaking debauch. On the face of each skulking rake the stamp of scoundrel was branded, so plainly that a child might read it. It is a pity that we know these rascals too well, to connect one pleasant thought with their fine features and pretty dresses.

These, perhaps, were some of the selfsame revellers who lurked about the seas as buccaniers at the beginning of the war, armed to the teeth, and who bore down one night upon a British merchant ship becalmed; who stabbed the watch; then cut the throats of the sleeping crew; then played ghastly tricks to their mangled remains; then plundered the vessel, and then departed. The ship drifted

with her dreadful burden over the beautiful waters of the Ægean, where she was found, some hours afterwards by a man-of-war's boat, which put off, irate at having hoisted signals to the death-laden bark in vain!

From the open doors of other booths and hovels I heard nasal droning songs, the uncouth sounds of rude instruments, and the shrill tones of wrangling women of no good repute. Here, also, were a crowd of Maltese and Ionians, who bring our name into discredit wherever they are known. Lounging groups of superstitious mariners of the Adriatic added their lazy figures to the heterogeneous mass—a wild company; amongst whom it is never prudent to venture; for their knives gleam on small pretence; and their victims are never heard of more. Human life is held of a strange cheapness by these miscreants, and the law is powerless.

Towards sundown, I returned to the ship; and, after dinner, as the evening closed quite in, a wandering Italian boy came on board. He was one of those itinerant musicians who roam over every country in the world; gathering up a little hoard with many a stern, unchronicled act of self-denial, and passing bitter days enough, poor lads, Heaven help them! This specimen had a hurdygurdy, an ivory whistle, and a rich impudent voice, with which he trolled forth a number of those ballads popular in the Austrian and Neapolitan sea-ports. They were mostly in the form of a dialogue between a young sailor sweetheart, a girl, and her mother, on the old subject of love and ruse, of which the salt is savoured among the people of every land, and the fresh, lively charm is felt from pole to pole. At the end of each verse the singer always lingered on the last note with an arch relish; and, carrying it on through his whistle, trilled out a sparkling impromptu chorus, which had a world of droll life and inuendo in it. Some of the airs he whistled had a dashing, seafaring pathos, quite captivating; and we fairly lay back and had a laugh at his roguish jests, as pleasant and refreshing as is awakened by the airy couplets of a French vaudeville. Yet those ballads seemed to speak aside to me, with a touching and eloquent plea for a race whose children have been taught to solace their captivity with songs, till they have mercifully learned a wondrous cunning in them; and who (knowing that their hopes are a coin with which they can buy but shadows) have courted oblivion so long, that they have found all beauty, freedom, heart-food, their brightest, quickest life, within a dream.

It was very pretty and affecting to see our captain and his wife—a lady from Ragusa—exchange bashful smiles and tell-tale glances, as they both listened to some song which, perhaps revealed their own story, and invested it with the fascination of a romance. Once, the volatile sailor was so moved, by an

uncontrollable impulse, that he seized his wife round the waist, and whirled her off in a waltz. It was a fine tribute to the untaught craft of the singer, whose eyes lighted up with a minstrel fire, and his feet beat time as he watched them. When the captain stopped for want of breath, it was but polite to make a bow, and offer to take the lady round and round again; for there she stood, offering irresistible invitation, with foot advanced. Then the other women began to stand up; while the dark-eyed gypsies from Galicia grouped naturally round the dancers in picturesque attitudes, and looked on. So we had quite a little ball.

At nine o'clock the trumpets sounded from an Austrian man-of-war on the station, and the report of a solitary cannon boomed over the sulky waters. After this, the officers went away, and our little festival terminated.

So ended the first day we lay in the port of Sulina; and I noticed, as night came on, that the moon looked veiled and misty; also that light feathery clouds were flitting about in an unsettled way, as if the sky were troubled. About eleven o'clock we heard the wind rising. At first a few sobbing gusts reached us, at intervals, as if they came from afar off, but making our spars rattle, and our cordage whip the masts. I could see also, before I turned in, that the sailing-vessels in the offing had made all taut and trim, and had lowered their yards for rough weather; but the steamers got their steam up and went out to sea. From time to time during the night we heard the mournful sound of distress guns to windward, and now and then a majestic hulk drifted labouring towards us. The winds and the sea-gulls seemed to whoop in derision around her, and the waves reared their heads triumphant and rejoicing.

It was an awful storm. The sea was everywhere convulsed with a pitiless wrath, and the white foam flashed proud and high, as wave rushed upon wave in passionate strife. Of the fifteen sail riding yesterday at anchor yonder, nine broke from their cables, and three lay wrecked in sight of us. Though we were within the bar, our captain was roused thrice during the night, and the voices of our crew sounded in alarm through the darkness; for we were wedged in by shipping, and ever and again some vessel was driven furiously against us by the might of the elements; our vessel danced and rolled like a child's toy, even in its sheltered place. Our gaunt lean sailors ran to and fro, yelping fears at every fresh collision, and muttering hasty prayers to the Virgin; Jews gasped and gabbled to themselves, clutching the handles of their sea-chests, and keeping always a wary eye upon them; but some Turks who were with us, sat calmly smoking through it all, uttering no sound but "God is great."

Below, in the cabin were the Christian

ladies pale and terrified, and huddled altogether on the sofa by the fire-place. Near them boozed a gang of sharpers, whom no dread or danger could drag from the gambling-table. Their blasphemy and hot disputes mingled with the storm. Perhaps, however, they were impressed equally with us according to their differing natures, by the grand horror of the scene. Let no man judge the depth of another's feeling by the mode of its expression.

The sky above us was the true old leaden grey Crimean colour, which canopied our sickening armies before Sebastopol last winter. There was a partial fog over the land. On such a sky looked the helpless crew of the fated Prince, when her machinery refused to work, and they were dashed against the iron heights of Balaclava. It was such a fog which closed round gallant Giffard when the Tiger stranded, and he could only flash back a hopeless defiance to the Russian guns. On this low gloomy shore, too—over which the sea-birds swoop and scream so ominously—dwelt the last dying glance of the young and chivalrous Parker.

The gale lasted for three days, raging every hour more rudely. The third day, towards evening, a rain, fine as dust, mingled with the wind. At night the rain changed to snow, and the cold increased. Then we had a fall of mingled rain and snow. The wind abated a little towards morning: but, before noon, there came a perfect hurricane with rain and snow very fierce. The small snow-flakes were whisked about by the wind with incredible violence.

Again we counted the work of the night, and numbered five wrecks. A crowd of Cossacks, assembled round the devoted vessels, were trying to seize two swollen corpses with grappling hooks. As the drowned bodies, however, obviously did not belong to any of the wrecks we saw, they had probably floated to us from some scene of disaster elsewhere. It was a ghastly thing to see the breakers twirling and tossing about them so scornfully. God's images, who, a few days, or perhaps hours, before, had been like unto ourselves.

Of the wrecked ships the crew of one perished: all hands on board the rest were saved. At night we saw another fated vessel going to inevitable destruction; then the darkness hid her. When morning broke she was among the breakers; but, out of the reach of help, and they swept disdainfully over her shrieking decks. The miserable crew clung wildly on to spar and mast, no boat venturing out to save them. We saw the hungry waves sweep on towards them with a hoarse cry; the keen ice wind palsying their strength. They were, poor fellows, carried away one by one. Their contortions were horrible. They writhed, and twisted, and grappled on to anything they could seize, with despairing

energy. For a little while their shrill screams rose even over the cry of the elements, —then all was still. Six only of the crew were saved. These, springing into a boat, dropped over before she struck, and had been carried as witnesses of Almighty mercy, miraculously to land.

Late in the afternoon of the fifth day, the sun peeped coyly and ashamed at us, once or twice. Then came the windgusts again, like the tumultuous sobs of a grief not yet subsided, and the sun was veiled again, and the storm howled on as before.

Something deserving of notice was that, all the time the hurricane lasted, a broad, streak of sky was distinctly visible towards the east. It never grew larger or smaller, and its promise of fine weather was altogether illusory.

We lay fifteen days at the Port of Sulina. At length our wine was exhausted, and even our provisions ran short; for the bakers lazily refused to bake us any bread, though the captain himself went to parley with them. We got a little stringy fresh meat now and then, with sometimes a fresh fish; but we lived chiefly on raw ham and ship's biscuits. The steward—a plump, tight, rich-complexioned Sancho Panza, with sleek black hair and small roguish eyes—having the distribution of these delicacies, became a man of importance, and found it a very good business. Our fore-cabin passengers suffered severely. They watched us of the after cabin with famished and hateful looks as we went down to dinner; for their own meals were infinitely more scanty than ours. The small supply of orthodox food which the Jews also had brought with them being nearly exhausted, the Greeks, who have a traditional hatred of the chosen people, taunted them with offers of pork. It was at once ludicrous and pathetic to see the feverish trembling indignation, and hear the odd anathemas with which the children of Israel garulously replied.

Upon the whole, our position was not so cheerful and exhilarating as might have been desired by persons fond of comfort and gaiety. To make it the less inviting, cholera gudded about the neighbourhood with great activity, and did not contribute materially to raise our spirits, nor increase our current fund of pleasing anecdote. A guest of our captain, in sound health and with a noticeable appetite, came and sat with us at dinner one day. On the next day we asked whether he was coming to dinner again, and we were told he was buried. One of our passengers died at breakfast in the midst of us. Moreover, it was an awful sort of thing to wake in the small hours of the night and hear a man in the next cabin bemoaning his crimes in a strange tongue; calling on the saints for mercy, under an impression (likely enough to be true) that he was attacked by the swift destroyer, and was hastening with panic-

stricken steps on his journey to another world.

Therefore I was truly thankful when the wind at last abated. It was sometime, however, even then, before our troubles were over; for there was such a heavy swell that no boat, with sail or oar, dared venture to convey us from one steamer to the other. A steam-tug would have done our business in half an hour; but there was no steam-tug.

It was not until the seventeenth day after our arrival that we were at length delivered from durance. The sea having then grown calmer (though still running very high) we fired a gun and hoisted signals for the packet that was to convey us to Constantinople, and which had returned to her anchorage. So she stood nearer in towards us about mid-day; then one half of the passengers who had left Galatz with us, nearly three weeks before, on urgent business, returned whence they came, having missed their opportunities. The others—I among the number—went over the bar.

It was a hazardous trip. Our boatmen charged us eighteen ducats, or about nine pounds; every man in it fairly staking his life against our money. It was a large boat and well manned; but it shook and trembled on the waters at the mouth of the river, as if it had been a cockleshell. Once we were carried quite round, and I made up my mind to swim for it, if I should lose my grasp on the boat when she turned over. She righted again, however, and went rearing and pitching forward for some hundred yards till the danger was over. Not a week before, a boat with fifteen souls in it had gone down in the very spot where we met and escaped that peril.

No one knows how long the present infamous condition of the Sulina mouth of the Danube may last; for few, I am sorry to say, seem seriously to interest themselves in such questions. I have written this paper, therefore; not to amuse an idle hour, but with a solemn and earnest hope that it may be the means of calling general attention to a matter of European importance. I have rather understated the case than overstated it; having omitted many things which might have added to the interest of the description, lest any word should creep in that might appear fanciful or exaggerated; for I know that a public writer, who would render any real service to mankind, must simply abide by indisputable facts.

Let me add, then, that, although it is but a very few weeks ago I was on the scene I have endeavoured to describe, I learn by the French papers that no less than sixty vessels have been wrecked since then, and that three hundred human lives have been lost off the Sulina Mouth. I have not dared to trifle with the sympathies of the public in this matter. I have honestly made a plain statement, and

venture, with respectful importunity, to press it on their attention. We have taken upon ourselves a grave responsibility in these countries, and whenever Peace is discussed, it behoves us to be mindful of it, so that not in vain and as to a heedless people may have been confided in trust to our generation that immense inheritance—the Empire of the Seas.

DAY-WORKERS AT HOME.

THERE are two classes of milliners' girls. In the first class are those who live in the house at which they work, receiving for their labour board, what passes for lodging, and as much pay as a governess—a sum that may be twelve or twenty pounds, or may be even four times that amount, per annum. Girls in this class are stimulated by some prospect of promotion: they may live to be forewomen, or to have shops of their own. The second class consists of day-workers, who go to the milliners, at eight in the morning, after an early breakfast, and (with an allowance of time during which they may depart in search of dinner) work until eight or nine at night; sometimes in the season, until ten or eleven. Work over, the labourers return to their own lodgings. A young woman in this class earns about seven shillings a week, wherewith to pay for lodging, food, and clothes. If she have any relatives in London to whose homes she can betake herself, then it is well; if she be a solitary worker, forced to earn an independent livelihood—a young girl from the country, or an orphan—she goes to her garret; and there, sitting in utter cheerlessness, suffers temptations which there is no poor man, even though a rogue, who would not wish to see his daughter spared.

These workers labour in support of luxury all the day long: their sense of pleasure, love of ornament and colour, is developed, and their honest earnings only suffer them to lodge in dingy garrets chiefly found among back streets. Two shillings a week, or at the utmost, half-a-crown, is all that can be spared for rent out of an income that is only fourteen pence a working day; at most a penny-farthing for the working hour. Half-a-crown or two shillings is the rent of a dilapidated room, even among the pauperised inhabitants of Bethnal Green. Necessarily it can purchase no very pleasant dwelling, we may be assured, in the purlieus of Regent Street.

To make the position of such young women pleasanter and safer is not difficult; but there is only one way of improving it. The solitary day-worker cannot do much for herself with seven shillings; but, by associating with companions of her own class and adopting some system of combination, her funds may be made sufficient to maintain a tolerably happy little household. How to begin is the question.

Two ladies, thoughtful for their less fortunate sisters—the Lady Hobart, and the Viscountess Goderich—have been endeavouring, during the last few months, to help them in the making of the troublesome first step. Their chief difficulty has lain in the necessity of having one of these associated homes not distant from the places of business, which are most numerous at the west end of London. In extending the experiment which these benevolent ladies have commenced, care must be taken, therefore, to select a house which, for the rent it costs, supplies within its walls space enough for every just want of as many inmates as are necessary to the working of the system. The ladies before mentioned have taken upon themselves the first risk by opening a home of this description at number two, Manchester Street, Manchester Square. It allows ample sleeping space; each dormitory containing four or six single beds. It supplies also a spacious sitting-room, in which there is a hired piano and a little library of cheap and pleasant books; the use of a kitchen-range, light, firing, and all necessary household furnishing—linen, plates and dishes, knives, forks, and spoons—all for the price of a cold, dark garret—two shillings a week. If two persons unite, and pay rent for a double bed, the charge is only eightpence to each of them.

Possibly, for accommodation and the quality provided in this instance, the rent ought to be a few pence higher. Be that as it may, the establishers of this nest think, that when it contains its full complement of thirty-five or forty inmates, it will pay its own expenses, even with no higher contribution from each inmate than that now fixed. All they desire is that its existence should be widely known, and that especially the hard-working girls who may be made happier by adopting the suggestion it embodies, may hear of it; may understand the comfort of it; and learn to co-operate with one another not merely in this house, but in a great many others of the kind.

It is entirely their own affair: nothing is meant but to help them through the difficulty of beginning. In the home now established there are at present not more than eleven inmates; and only ignorance of its existence or its meaning could keep out the other five-and-twenty. It means no charity, no intrusion, no meddling supervision; only such help as woman may receive from woman, willingly and thankfully. The house to be self-supporting must indeed be full; but once understood, there will rarely be, in any of these snug little establishments, a vacant bed.

If it be ever the privilege of this journal to cheer during an odd half-hour, the weary heart of a young day-worker, and this page comes to be read by her; and if she be not by happy chance, already well lodged, let her accept our counsel, offered with all cordiality, and with the most sincere good-

will: we recommend that she should visit Manchester Street, look at the house, and talk all its arrangements over with the Mrs. Lomas, who, as matron, watches on the spot over the beginnings of the scheme. She will find this matron herself to be young and cheerful, and in earnest with the wish to be of use. She is one who has paid many a friendly visit to day-workers in their garrets, for the purpose of explaining to them what it is so much for their own comfort to understand.

When this house is full, it will belong fairly to the day-workers themselves; and there are no rules but such as they would, with a regard to the economy of their funds, and to their personal respectability, make for their own following. Though few return from duties until nine in the evening the sitting-room fire, in winter-time, is lighted at six o'clock and it is kept alight all day on Sunday; so that the apartment is always warm and comfortable when the inmates use it. At eleven at night it is put out; and any inmate staying out of the house after eleven must give a reason for so doing. A respectable reference is necessarily required with each new-comer (if only to her own employer), and there are no other customs that are not to be found usual in any other private household. The girls buy what they please, and cook it how and when they please for themselves, at their kitchen ranges. If any or all of them like to associate their funds for common meals, it is for them to say and do what they desire.

At Manchester Street, it should be added, there is a free singing-class, and there are evenings of music. Opportunities of self-improvement are also supplied by the warm-hearted promoters of the scheme. But in all this the sole desire is, to give a kindly and a hearty lift at starting, to a way—into which those whom it concerns may soon get for themselves—of extracting all the happiness, security, and comfort in their power out of scanty incomes.

TWO COLLEGE FRIENDS.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

IN the year seventeen hundred and seventy three, two young men took possession of the only habitable rooms of the old tumble-down rectory-house of Combe-Warleigh, in one of the wildest parts of one of the western counties, then chiefly notable for miles upon miles of totally uncultivated moor and hill. The rooms were not many; consisting only of two wretched little bed-chambers and a parlour of diminutive size. A small building which leaned against the outer wall served as a kitchen to the establishment; and the cook, an old woman of sixty years of age, retired every night to a cottage about a quarter of a mile from the parsonage, where she had occupied a garret for many years. The house

had originally been built of lath and plaster, and in some places revealed the skeleton walls where the weather had peeled off the outer coating, and given the building an appearance of ruin and desolation which comported with the bleakness of the surrounding scenery. With the exception of the already-named cottage and a small collection of huts around the deserted mansion of the landlord of the estate, there were no houses in the parish. How it had ever come to the honour of possessing a church and rectory no one could discover; for there were no records or traditions of its ever having been more wealthy or populous than it then was;—but it was in fact only nominally a parish, for no clergyman had been resident for a hundred years; the living was held by the fortunate possessor of a vicarage about fifteen miles to the north, and with the tithes of the united cures made up a stately income of nearly ninety pounds a year. No wonder there were no repairs on the rectory—nor frequent visits to his parishioners. It was only on the first Sunday of each month he rode over from his dwelling-place and read the service to the few persons who happened to remember it was the Sabbath, or understood the invitation conveyed to them by the one broken bell swayed to and fro by the drunken shoemaker (who also officiated as clerk) the moment he saw the parson's shovel hat appear on the ascent of the Vaird hill. And great accordingly was the surprise of the population; and pleased the heart of the rector, when two young gentlemen from Oxford hired the apartments I have described—fitted them up with a cart load of furniture from Hawsleigh, and gave out that they were going to spend the long vacation in that quiet neighbourhood for the convenience of study. Nor did their conduct belie their statement. Their table was covered with books and maps, and dictionaries; and after their frugal breakfast, the whole day was devoted to reading. Two handsome intelligent looking young men as ever you saw—both about the same age and height; with a contrast both in look and disposition that probably formed the first link in the close friendship that existed between them.

Arthur Hayning, a month or two the senior, was of a more self relying nature and firmer character than the other. In uninterrupted effort he pursued his work, never looking up, never making a remark, seldom even answering a stray observation of his friend. But when the hour assigned for the close of his studies had arrived, a change took place in his manner. He was gayer, more active and enquiring than his volatile companion. The books were packed away, the writing-desk locked up; with a stout stick in his hand, a strong hammer in his pocket, and a canvas bag slung over his shoulders, he started off on an exploring expedition among the neighbouring hills; while Winnington

Harvey arming himself with a green gauze net, and his coat-sleeve glittering with a multitude of pins, accompanied him in his walk—diverging for long spaces in search of butterflies, which he brought back in triumph, scientifically transfixed on the leaves of his pocket-book. On their return home, their after-dinner employment consisted in arranging their specimens. Arthur spread out on the clay floor of the passage the different rocks he had gathered up in his walk. He broke them into minute fragments, examined them through his magnifying glass, sometimes dissolved a portion of them in aquafortis, tasted them, smelt to them, and finally threw them away; not so the more fortunate naturalist; with him the mere pursuit was a delight, and the victims of his net a perpetual source of rejoicing. He fitted them into a tray, wrote their names and families on narrow slips of paper in the neatest possible hand, and laid away his box of treasures as if they were choicest specimens of diamonds and rubies.

"What a dull occupation yours is!" said Winnington one night, "compared to mine. You go thumping old stones and gathering up lumps of clay, grubbing for ever among mud or sand, and never lifting up your eyes from this dirty spot of earth. Whereas I go merrily over valley and hill, keep my eyes open to the first flutter of a beautiful butterfly's wing, follow it in its meandering, happy flight—"

"And kill it—with torture," interposed Arthur Hayning, coldly.

"But it's for the sake of science. Nay, as I am going to be a doctor, it's perhaps for the sake of fortune—"

"And that justifies you in putting it to death?"

"There you go with your absurd German philanthropies; though, by the bye, love for a butterfly scarcely deserves the name. But think of the inducement, think of the glory of verifying with your own eyes the identity of a creature described in books; think of the interests at stake; and, above all, and this ought to be a settling argument to you, think of the enjoyment it will give my cousin Lucy to have her specimen-chest quite filled; and when you are married to her—"

"Dear Winnington, do hold your tongue. How can I venture to look forward to that for many years? I have only a hundred a-year. She has nothing." Arthur sighed as he spoke.

"How much do you require? When do you expect to be rich enough?"

"When I have three times my present fortune—and that will be—who can tell? I may suddenly discover a treasure like Aladdin's, and then, Winnington, my happiness will be perfect."

"I think you should have made acquaintance with the magician, or even got pos-

session of the ring, before you asked her hand," said Winnington Harvey with a changed tone. "She is the nicest girl in the world, and loves you with all her heart; but if you have to wait till fortune comes—"

"She will wait also, willingly and happily. She has told me so. I love her with the freshness of a heart that has never loved anything else. I love you too, Winnington, for her sake; and we had better not talk any more on the subject, for I don't like your perpetual objections to the engagement."

Winnington, as usual, yielded to the superiority of his friend, and was more affectionate in his manner to him than ever, as if to blot out the remembrance of what he had recently said. They went on in silence with their respective works, and chipped stones, and impaled butterflies till a late hour.

"Don't be alarmed, Winnington," said Arthur, with a smile, as he lighted his bed-candle that night. "I am twenty-one and Lucy not nineteen. The genii of the lamp will be at our bidding before we are very old, and you shall have apartments in the palace, and be appointed resident physician to the princess."

"With a salary of ten thousand a year, and my board and washing."

"A seat on my right hand, whenever I sit down to my banquets."

"Good. That's a bargain," said Winnington, laughing, and they parted to their rooms.

Geology was not at that time a recognised science—in England. But Arthur Hayning had been resident for some years in Germany, where it had long been established as one of the principal branches of a useful education. There were chairs of metallurgy, supported by government grants, and schools of mining, both theoretic and practical, established wherever the nature of the soil was indicative of mineral wealth. Hayning was an orphan, the son of a country surgeon, who had managed to amass the sum of two thousand pounds. He was left in charge of a friend of his father, engaged in the Hamburg trade, and by him had been early sent to the care of a protestant clergyman in Prussia, who devoted himself to the improvement of his pupil. His extraordinary talents were so dwelt on by this excellent man, in his letters to the guardian, that it was resolved to give him a better field for their display, than the University of Jena could afford, and he had been sent to one of the public schools in England, and from it, two years before this period, been transferred, with the highest possible expectations of friends and teachers to — College, Oxford. Here he had made acquaintance with Winnington Harvey; and through him, having visited him one vacation at his home in War-

wickshire, had become known to Lucy Mainfield, the only daughter of a widowed aunt of his friend, with no fortune but her unequalled beauty, and a fine, honest, open, and loving disposition, which made an impression on Arthur, perhaps, because it was in so many respects in contrast with his own.

For some weeks their mode of life continued unaltered. Study all the day, geology and natural history in the evening. Their path led very seldom through the village of Combe-Warleigh; but, on one occasion, having been a distant range among the wilds, and being belated, they took a nearer course homeward, and passed in front of the dwelling-house of the squire. There was a light in the windows on the drawing-room floor, and the poetic Winnington was attracted by the sight.

"I've read of people," he said, "seeing the shadows of beautiful girls on window-blinds, and dying of their love, though never knowing more of them,—wouldn't it be strange if Squire Warleigh had returned, and with a daughter young and beautiful, and if I saw her form thrown clearly like a portrait on the curtain, and—"

"But there's no curtain," interrupted Arthur. "Come along."

"Ha, stop!" cried Winnington, laying his hand on Arthur's shoulder. "Look there!"

They looked, and saw a girl who came between them and the light, with long hair falling over her shoulders, while she held a straw hat in her hand; her dress was close-fitting to her shape, a light pelisse of green silk edged with red ribbons, such as we see as the dress of young pedestrians in Sir Joshua's early pictures.

"How beautiful," said Winnington, in a whisper. "She has been walking out. What is she doing? Who is she? What is her name?"

The apparition turned half round, and revealed her features in profile. Her lips seemed to move, she smiled very sweetly, and then suddenly moved out of the sphere of vision, and left Winnington still open-mouthed, open-eyed, gazing towards the window.

"A nice enough girl," said Arthur coldly; "but come along; the old woman will be anxious to get home; and besides, I am very hungry."

"I shall never be hungry again," said Winnington, still transfixed and immovable. "You may go if you like. Here I stay in hopes of another view."

"Good night, then," replied Arthur, and rapidly walked away.

How long the astonished Winnington remained I cannot tell. It was late when he arrived at the rectory. The old woman, as Arthur had warned him, had gone home. Arthur let him in.

"Well!" he enquired, "have you found out the unknown?"

"All about her—but for heaven's sake some bread and cheese. Is there any here?"

"I thought you were never to be hungry again."

"It is the body only which has these requirements. My soul is satiated for ever. Here's to Ellen Warleigh!"—he emptied the cup at a draught.

"The Squire's daughter?"

"His only child. They have been abroad for some years; returned a fortnight ago. Her father and she live in that desolate house."

"He will set about repairing it, I suppose," said Arthur.

"He can't. They are as poor as we are. And I am glad of it," replied Winnington, going on with his bread and cheese.

"He has an immense estate," said Arthur, almost to himself. "Combe-Warleigh must consist of thousands of acres."

"Of heath and hill. Not worth three hundred a year. Besides, he was extravagant in his youth. I met the shoemaker at the gate, and he told me all about them. I wonder if she's fond of butterflies," he added: "it would be so delightful for us to hunt them together."

"Nonsense, boy; finish your supper and go to bed. Never trouble yourself about whether a girl cares for butterflies or not whose father has only three hundred a year and has been extravagant in his youth."

"What a wise fellow you are," said Winnington, "about other people's affairs! How many hundreds a year had Lucy's father? Nothing but his curacy and a thousand pounds he got with aunt Jane."

"But Lucy's very fond of butterflies, you know, and that makes up for poverty," said Arthur, with a laugh. "The only thing I see valuable about them is their golden wings."

The companions were not now so constantly together as before. Their studies underwent no change; but their evening occupations were different. The geologist continued his investigations among the hills; the naturalist seemed to believe that the Papilio had become a gregarious insect, and inhabited the village. He was silent as to the result of his pursuits, and brought very few specimens home. But his disposition grew sweeter than ever. His kindness to the drunken shoemaker was extraordinary. His visits to several old women in the hamlet were frequent and long. What a good young man he was! How attentive to the sick!—and he to be only twenty-one! On the first Sunday of the month he was in waiting at the door to receive the rector. He took his horse from him, and put it into the heap of ruins which was called the stable with his own hands. He went with him into the church. He looked all the time of service at the Squire's pew, but it was empty. He walked alongside

the rector on his return; he accompanied him as far as the village, and told him quite in a careless manner, of the family's return.

"I have done it," he said, when he got home again, late at night. "I know them both. The father is a delightful old man. He kept me and the clergyman to dinner—and Ellen! there never was so charming a creature before; and, Arthur, she's fond of butterflies, and catches them in a green gauze net, and has a very good collection—particularly of night-hawks. That's the reason she was out so late the night we saw her at the window. They were very kind; they knew all about our being here, and Ellen thanked me so for being good to her poor people. I felt quite ashamed."

The young man's eyes were flashing with delight; his voice trembled; he caught the cold gaze of his friend fixed upon him, and blushed.

"You look very much ashamed of yourself," said Arthur, "and I am sorry you have made their acquaintance. It will interfere with our object in coming here."

"Ah! and I told her you were a perfect German; and she understands the language, and I said you would lend her any of your books she chose."

"What!" exclaimed Arthur, starting up excited to sudden anger; "what right had you, sir, to make any offer of the kind? I wouldn't lend her a volume to save her life, or yours, or any one's in the world. She shan't have one,—I'll burn them first."

"Arthur!" said Winnington, astonished. "What is it that puts you in such a passion? I'm sure I didn't mean to offend you. I will tell her you don't like to lend your books; I'm sorry I mentioned it to her,—but I will apologise, and never ask you again."

"I was foolish to be so hot about a trifle," said Arthur, resuming his self-command. "I'm very sorry to disappoint your friend; but I really can't spare a single volume,—besides," he said, with a faint laugh, "they are all about metallurgy and mining."

"I told her so," said Winnington, "and she has a great curiosity to see them."

"You did!" again exclaimed Arthur, flushing with wrath. "You have behaved like a fool or a villain,—one or both, I care not which. You should have known, without my telling, that these books are sacred. If the girl knows German let her read old Gotsched's plays. She shall not see a page of any book of mine."

Winnington continued silent under this outbreak; he was partly overcome with surprise; but grief was uppermost.

"I've known you for two years, I think, Hayning," he said; "from the first time we met I admired and liked you. I acknowledge your superiority in everything; your energy, your talent, your acquirements. I felt a

pleasure in measuring your height, and was proud to be your friend. I know you despise me, for I am a weak, impulsive, womanly-natured fellow;—but I did not know you disliked me. I shall leave you to-morrow, and we shall never meet again." He was going out of the room.

"I did not mean what I said," said Arthur, in a subdued voice. "I don't despise you. I don't dislike you. I beg your pardon,—will you forgive me, Winnington?"

"Ay, if you killed me!" sobbed Winnington, taking hold of Arthur's scarcely extended hand. "I know I am very foolish; but I love Ellen Warleigh, and would give her all I have in the world."

"That's not much," said Arthur, still moodily brooding over the incident; "and never will be, if you wear your heart so perpetually on your sleeve."

"You forget that I don't need to have any riches of my own," said Winnington, gaily. "I am to be physician to the Prince and Princess in Aladdin's palace, and shall sit always on your right hand when you entertain the nobility. So, shake hands, and good night."

"But Ellen is not to have my books," said Arthur, sitting down to the table, and spreading a volume before him. "I wouldn't lend you for an hour," he said, when he was alone, cherishing the book, "no, not to Lucy Mainfield herself."

CHAPTER II.

August and September passed away, and October had now begun. Arthur avoided the Warleighs as much as he could; Winnington was constantly at their house. The friends grew estranged. But, with the younger, the estrangement made no difference in the feeling of affection he always had entertained for Arthur. He was hurt, however, by the change he perceived in his manner. He was hurt at his manifest avoidance of the society of the squire and his daughter. He was hurt, also, at the total silence Arthur now maintained on the subject of his cousin Lucy. He saw her letters left unopened, sometimes for a whole day, upon the table instead of being greedily torn open the moment the straggling and uncertain post had achieved their delivery at the door. He was hurt at some other things besides, too minute to be recorded; too minute perhaps to be put into language even by himself, but all perceptible to the sensitive heart of friendship such as his. With no visible improvement in Arthur's fortune or prospects, it was evident that his ideas were constantly on the rise. A strange sort of contempt of poverty mingled with his aspirations after wealth. An amount of income which, at one time, would have satisfied his desires, was looked on with disdain, and the possessors of it almost with hatred. The last words Winnington had heard him speak about Lucy were, that marriage was impos-

sible under a thousand a-year. And where was that sum to come from? The extent of Lucy's expectations was fifty,—his own, a hundred—and yet he sneered at the Warleighs as if they had been paupers; although in that cheap country, and at that cheap time, a revenue of three hundred pounds enabled them to live in comfort, almost in luxury.

Winnington took no thought of to-morrow, but loved Ellen Warleigh, with no consideration of whether she was rich or poor. It is probable that Ellen had no more calculating disposition than Winnington; for it is certain her sentiments towards him were not regulated by the extent of his worldly wealth,—perhaps she did not even know what her sentiments towards him were—but she thought him delightful, and wandered over the solitary heaths with him, in search of specimens. They very often found none, in the course of their four hours' ramble, and yet came home as contented as if they had discovered an Emperor of Morocco on every bush. Baulked in their natural history studies by the perverse absence of moth and butterfly, they began,—by way of having something to do—to take up the science of botany. The searches they made for heath of a particular kind! The joy that filled them when they came on a group of wild flowers, and gathered them into a little basket they carried with them, and took them back to the manor, and astonished Mr. Warleigh with the sound of their Latin names! What new dignity the commonest things took under that sonorous nomenclature! How respectable a nettle grew when called an urtica, and how suggestive of happiness and Gretna Green when a flower could be declared to be cryptogamic.

"See what a curious root this piece of broom has," said Winnington, one night, on his return from the Manor, and laid his specimen on the table.

Arthur hardly looked up from his book, and made some short reply.

"It took Ellen and me ten minutes, with all our force, to pull it up by the roots. We had no knife, or I should merely have cut off the stalk; but see, now that the light falls on it, what curious shining earth it grows in; with odd little stones twisted up between the fibres! Did you ever see anything like it?" Arthur had fixed his eyes on the shrub during this speech—He stretched forth his hand and touched the soil still clinging to the roots—he put a small portion to his lips—his face grew deadly pale.

"Where did you get this?" he said.

"Down near the waterfall—not a hundred yards from this."

"On whose land?—on the glebe?" said Arthur, speaking with parched mouth, and still gazing on the broom.

"Does Warleigh know of this?" he went

on, "or the clergyman? Winnington! no one must be to told, tell Ellen to be silent; but she is not aware perhaps. Does she suspect?"

"What? what is there to suspect, my dear Arthur? Don't you think you work too much," he added, looking compassionately on the dilated eye and pale cheek of his companion. "You must give up your studies for a day or two. Come with us on an exploring expedition to the Outer fell to-morrow; Mr. Warleigh is going."

"And give him the fruits of all my reading," Arthur muttered angrily, "of all I learned at the Hartz; tell him how to proceed, and leave myself a beggar. No!" he said, "I will never see him. As to this miserable little weed," he continued, tearing the broom to pieces, and casting the fragments contemptuously into the fire; "it is nothing; you are mad to have given up your butterflies to betake yourself to such a ridiculous pursuit as this. Don't go there any more—there!" (here he stamped on it with his foot) "How damp it is! the fire has little power."

"You never take any interest, Arthur, in anything I do. I don't know, I'm sure, how I've offended you. As to the broom, I know it's a poor common thing, but I thought the way its roots were loaded rather odd. Ellen will perhaps be disappointed, for we intended to plant it in her garden, and I only asked her to let me show it to you, it struck me as being so very curious. Come, give up your books and learning for a day. We must leave this for Oxford in a week, and I wish you to know more of the Warleighs before we go."

"I am not going back to Oxford," said Arthur, "I shall take my name off the books."

Winnington was astonished. He was also displeased. "We promised to visit my aunt," he said, "on our way back to college—Lucy will be grieved and disappointed."

"I will send a letter by you—I shall explain it all—I owe her a letter already."

"Have you not answered that letter yet? it came a month ago," said Winnington. "Oh! if Ellen Warleigh would write a note to me, and let me write to her, how I would wait for her letters! how I would answer them from morn to night."

"She would find you a rather troublesome correspondent," said Arthur, watching the disappearance of the last particle of the broom as it leaped merrily in sparkles up the chimney. "Lucy knows that I am better employed than telling her ten times over, that I love her better than anything else—and that I long for wealth principally that it may enable me to call her mine. I shall have it soon. Tell her to be sure of that. I shall be of age in three days, then the wretched driblet my guardian now has charge

of comes into my hands ; I will multiply it a thousand-fold—and then—”

“The palace will be built,” said Winnington, who could not keep anger long, “and the place at your right hand will be got ready for the resident physician—who in the meantime recommends you to go quietly to bed, for you have overstrung your mind with work, and your health, dear Arthur, is not at all secure.”

For a moment, a touch of the old kindness came to Arthur's heart. He shook Winnington's hand. “Thank you, thank you,” he said, “I will do as you advise. Your voice is very like Lucy's, and so are your eyes—good night, dear Winnington.” And Winnington left the room, so did Arthur, but not for bed. A short time before this, a package had arrived from Hawsleigh, and had been placed away in a dark closet under the stairs. He looked for a moment out into the night. The moon was in a cloud, and the wind was howling with a desolate sound over the bare moor. He took down the package, and from it extracted a spade and a pickaxe ; and, gently opening the front door, went out. He walked quickly till he came to the waterfall ; he looked carefully round and saw a clump of broom. The ground from the rectory to this place formed a gentle declivity ; where the river flowed there were high banks, for the stream had not yet been swelled by the rains, and he first descended into the bed, and examined the denuded cliffs. He then hurried towards the broom, and began to dig. He dug and struck with the pickaxe, and shovelled up the soil—weighing, smelling, tasting it, as he descended foot by foot. He dug to the depth of a yard ; he jumped into the hole and pursued his work—breathless, hot, untiring. The moon for a moment came out from the clouds that obscured her. He availed himself of her light and held up a particle of soil and stone ; it glittered for an instant in the moonbeam. With an almost audible cry he threw it to the bottom of the excavation, and was scrambling out when he heard a voice. It was the drunken shoemaker returning from some distant merry-making. He lay down at the bottom of the hole, watching for the approaching footsteps. At a little distance from the waterfall the singer changed his path, and diverged towards the village. The song died off in the distance.

“That danger's past,” said Arthur, “both for him and me. I would have killed him if he had come nearer. Back, back,” he continued, while he filled up the hole he had made, carefully shovelling in the soil—“No eye shall detect that you have been moved.” He replaced the straggling turf where it had been disturbed ; stampt it down with his feet, and beat it smooth with his spade. And then went home.

“Hallo ! who's there ?” cried Winnington,

hearing the door open and shut. “Is that you, Arthur ?”

“Yes ; are you not asleep yet ?”

“I've been asleep for hours. How late you are. Weren't you out of the house just now ?”

“I felt hot, and went out for a minute to see the moon.”

“Hot ?” said Winnington. “I wish I had another blanket—good night.” Arthur passed on to his own room.

“If he had opened his door,” he said, “and seen my dirty clothes, these yellow stains on my knees, these dabbled hands, what could I have done ?” He saw himself in the glass as he said this ; there was something in the expression of his face that alarmed him. He drew back.

“He is very like Lucy,” he muttered to himself, “and I'm glad he didn't get out of bed.”

Meantime Winnington had a dream. He was on board a beautiful boat on the Isis. It seemed to move by its own force, as if it were a silver swan ; and the ripple as it went on took the form of music, and he thought it was an old tune that he had listened to in his youth. He sat beside Ellen Warleigh, with his hand locked in hers, and they watched the beautiful scenery through which the boat was gliding—past the pretty Cherwell, past the level meadows, past the Newnham woods, —and still the melody went on. Then they were in a country he did not know ; there were tents of gaudy colours on the shore ; and wild-eyed men in turbans and loose tunics looked out upon them. One came on board ; he was a tall dark Emir, with golden-sheathed scimitar, which clanked as he stepped on the seat. Winnington stood up and asked what the stranger wanted : the chief answered in Arabic, but Winnington understood him perfectly. He said he had come to put him to death for having dared to look upon his bride. He laid his grasp on him as he spoke, and tore him from Ellen's side. In the struggle Winnington fell over, and found himself many feet in front of the fairy boat. The Arab sat down beside Ellen, and put his arm round her waist, and then he suddenly took the shape of Arthur Hayning. The boat seemed to flutter its wings, and come faster on. Winnington tried to swim to one side, but could not. On came the boat, its glittering bows flashed before his eyes—they touched him—pressed him down ; he felt the keel pass over his head ; and down, down, still downward he went, and, on looking up, saw nothing but the boat above him ; all was dark where he was, for the keel seemed constantly between him and the surface, and yet he heard the old tune still going on. It was a tune his cousin Lucy used to play ; but at last, in his descent through the darkened water, he got out of hearing, and all was silent. The music had died away—and suddenly he heard a scream, and saw Ellen struggling in the water. He made a dart

towards her with arms stretched out—and overturned the candle he had left on the table at the side of his bed.

SORROW AND MY HEART.

To the field where I was lying
Once Sorrow came a-flying,
And bade me bring my heart to mould at her goodwill.
Shudd'ring, I turn'd aside;
"Avaunt! O fiend!" I cried,
"My heart is dear to me, and none shall work it ill!"

"But if thou must!" said she.
"Nay," said I, "let it be!
'Tis yet so young and tender, and so slight of make,
Ungentle touch would crush it,
Hard word for aye would hush it!"
She smiled, and said, "Hearts sooner turn to stone
than break!"

"Yet stay awhile!" I pray'd;
And, frowning, she obey'd;
While I to cast about my sentence to evade.

Then came she near again,
And hover'd o'er the plain
Where I sat listening to my darling's long love-story.
"Art ready now?" she cried:
"O, no! no!" I replied,
"My heart is now in all its fullest prime and glory!"

A third time came she near:
"Now!" said she, "now prepare!
For I must have thy heart to mould at my good
pleasure!"

"Here, take it!" I replied,
And pluck'd it from my side
(For I in sooth was half a-weary of my treasure).

"But what is this?" says she,
And flung it back to me;
"A stone! O traitor! thou shalt rue this jesting
turn!"

She wing'd her flight away,
And I to shriek and pray
For that dear angel, who would never more return.

FRENCH AND ENGLISH STAFF OFFICERS.

LOUIS DE BONFILS is a captain in the corps of état-major, or the staff corps of France. I have known him for several years, and always found him an honourable upright soldier; in every sense of the word, a gentleman. According to our insular ideas of decorum, the captain is, perhaps, rather too much given to swaggering about with his hands in the fardown pockets of his red trousers, and is slightly addicted to swearing when ladies are not by. An English cavalry captain might think Louis awfully slow, because he does not know or care anything about racing, is proud of, and wears, his uniform at all times and on all occasions, and has but one suit of plain clothes to his name. Moreover, since he commenced his career in the army, the captain has thought of, and worked for, nothing but his profession, and has, consequently, succeeded in making himself what the state pays him to be—a useful active

wheel in the great mass of French military machinery. Not but that my friend has his failings and shortcomings like other men; but he knows full well that unless he keeps pace with—and, to do so, he must strive to outrun—his comrades on the staff in the race for professional pre-eminence, he will be cast aside as a useless encumbrance on the army list of France. Besides his rank of captain in the staff corps, Louis de Bonfils is attached to the *dépôt général de la guerre* at Paris; where he is assisting, together with several others of his own rank and regiment, in completing a magnificent series of military maps of France, on a larger scale than any that have yet been published. The captain lately returned from the Crimea, where he was attached as aide-de-camp to the staff of a general of division; but, being sent to Paris in charge of some valuable topographical papers relating to Russia—which he had compiled when in camp by order of his superiors—the minister of war attached him, for the present, to the aforesaid *dépôt de la guerre*.

I met Captain de Bonfils the other day in Paris, and asked him to tell me what were the qualifications required for a staff officer in his service, and how he had been fortunate enough to obtain employment in so distinguished a corps. This request he complied with at once; assuring me that the career of one officer in the corps d'état-major may be taken as an exact sample of all, and that the same qualifications are required from every one who aspires to the honour of holding a commission in that regiment.

To apply the term regiment to the French staff is perhaps not quite appropriate, as the corps consists entirely of officers. Belonging to this body are thirty colonels, thirty lieutenant-colonels, one hundred chefs d'escadron (who would be termed majors in the English service), three hundred captains, and one hundred lieutenants. No one can join the regiment unless he passes through the special school instituted in eighteen hundred and eighteen for that purpose, and now called *L'École Impériale d'Application d'État-Major*. This my friend, Captain Louis de Bonfils, of course, did. There are sixty pupils in the establishment, one-half of whom leave it every year; thus creating thirty annual vacancies. Of these thirty, three are selected from the *École Polytechnique*; the remaining twenty-seven places in the staff-school are filled by competition from amongst fifty-seven candidates, thirty of whom must be sub-lieutenants who have been at least one year in the service, and must be under twenty-five years of age; and twenty-seven from the pupils of the military school of St. Cyr. Captain de Bonfils was one of the latter class. He had already spent his regulated time of three years at St. Cyr; and having passed the required examination for a commission in the line, might have joined a regiment without delay. Being one of the twenty-seven pupils

at the head of the list amongst the hundred who had passed in his term, he entered his name as a candidate for admittance into the *École d'État-Major*, and, as he was successful, joined that institution. Here he remained two years, going through the regular course of instruction in military science; and—although, like the rest of the pupils, he held the rank of a commissioned officer—under almost as strict military and collegiate discipline as any school-boy. Winter and summer, the young men in this college rise at six o'clock, and, with the exception of an hour for breakfast, half-an-hour for recreation in the middle of the day, and the same in the afternoon, work at one or other branch of their studies until five in the afternoon; at which hour they dine, and are then at liberty to go where they like, until ten in the evening. When they want to be out of college later, leave must be asked and obtained from the governor of the establishment. During the two years they remain at the staff-school, their time is divided regularly every day, each hour bringing its allotted task. The course of studies includes all the higher branches of mathematics, topography, geography, and fortification, together with statistics, military history, the English, German, and Italian languages, drawing, and the theory of military manœuvres—artillery, cavalry, and infantry—on a grand scale, and separate as well as combined. One hour every day is devoted to lessons in equitation in the riding-school; and every pupil is provided with an excellent charger at the cost of the state. The young men have each their own room, which is large enough to form, with comfort, a sleeping apartment and a study. They breakfast and dine together in the refectory, the former meal being served at nine, and the latter at five o'clock.

Out of the year, eight months are passed at Paris, and are devoted to hard work at the desk; three are spent in military surveying in various parts of France; and one entire month is required for the annual examinations. On entering the institution, and for twelve months afterwards, the pupils are attached to the second division, or lower school. After a year has elapsed they pass an examination, and, if found qualified, move into the higher, or first class. Any young man who cannot pass this examination is forthwith remanded to one of the regiments of the line. Serious sickness for any length of time is considered the only allowable excuse for any want of proficiency in their studies. At the end of the second year another examination has to be gone through, and is considered the final test of qualification. If passed, the pupil leaves the school with the rank of lieutenant in the staff corps. But, although enrolled as one of that distinguished body, he has yet to go through another and a longer ordeal of learning in practice that which, as yet, he has only been taught in theory. For two years he is

attached to a regiment of infantry; after that, for a like time, to a cavalry corps, and then, for one year, to a battery of artillery. With each of these branches of the service he has to do duty as a troop or company-officer for half the period; during the other half he is employed as a supernumerary-adjutant, under the orders of the colonel.

During the five years that he is attached to various regiments, the staff-lieutenant has to prepare and transmit regularly to his own corps, maps, papers, drawings, and surveys, which he is ordered to employ his time upon. My friend, Louis de Bonfils, after leaving the staff-college, was attached for two years to a regiment of infantry in Algiers, after which, he passed a like term with a cavalry corps in France, and then was ordered again to Algiers with a battery of artillery. Having completed his ten years' military education—viz., three at the College of St. Cyr, two at the staff school, and five attached to regiments of the three arms of the service, Captain de Bonfils commenced his career as a full-blown staff-officer: that is to say, he joined his corps with the rank of captain, and was then eligible for such appointments as officers of his grade can hold. It is from this class—and from this only—that the aides-de-camp of French general officers are selected, and it is amongst the captains of the corps d'état-major, that my friend de Bonfils takes his place. The French staff is not divided, like that of England, into two separate departments of adjutant-general and quarter-master-general. With our neighbours, these form one and the same staff, and every officer belonging to the staff corps is perfectly qualified to fulfil all duties relating to both departments. Nothing whatever is left to chance, or to the hazard of personal selection. The marshals of France alone, have the right to nominate their own aides-de-camp—each having two, one a colonel, the other a lieutenant-colonel of the corps d'état-major. All other officers who are entitled to aides-de-camp must take such as are nominated to their staff by the minister of war; and to ask for a friend or relative being appointed, would in France be thought an unsoldierlike and unpardonable liberty. Louis de Bonfils tells me that in about a year's time he expects to be promoted to the rank of chef d'escadron in the staff corps, and that he will then probably be sent either to one of the bureaux d'État-Major, which are attached to the various military divisions of France, or to the staff of some general in the Crimea. As I mentioned before, the Corps d'État-Major consists of one hundred lieutenants (who are attached to various regiments of infantry, cavalry, and artillery), three hundred captains, one hundred chefs d'escadron (or majors), thirty lieutenant-colonels, and thirty colonels; so that, without counting the junior rank, here is always in France an effective body of four

hundred and sixty officers who have received the most finished military education it is possible to attain in the world, and who are always ready to fill up vacancies in the higher departments, or to form a staff for an army taking the field.

Is there any difference, O my countrymen, and what difference, between this system and the system of the English service! Amongst my friends on this side the Channel, I can also number a staff officer, whom I have known some years. A better fellow, or more honorable man than Charley Benson does not exist; but what there is in him to make a staff officer out of I never could imagine. He entered the service about five years ago, and, having an uncle a general officer in command of an Irish district, was made aide-de-camp to that relative when he had done two years' duty with his regiment. The war in the Crimea broke out, and his uncle having good interest at the Horse Guards, got Charley named a deputy-assistant quartermaster-general with the army. What the duties of the appointment may be, I don't exactly know, and I am very certain Charley himself does not. He writes me that he has a lot of paper-work and returns to make out; but that with a good sergeant for a clerk, he manages to make it all serene.

Poor Charley! I can imagine how sorely puzzled he would be if left to his own resources with pen, ink, and paper. He can write a reasonably sensible letter when he likes, (it is not often that he does like,) but is decidedly eccentric in his orthography. As to the higher branches of mathematics, he knows nothing whatever of them. He can add up the various sums of money set down in the fly-leaves of his cheque-book, and so tell whether he has overdrawn his account with Messrs. Cox, the army agents; but beyond this his capabilities for figures does not extend. Topography, fortification, military drawing, military history, and military statistics, he denounces—when they are mentioned in his presence—by the energetic monosyllable—rot! As to military manœuvres on a grand scale, Charley says he got through his drill under the adjutant of his regiment, and what more would you have? Moreover, he is now on the staff, and having good interest, intends to remain there for some time; so what use, to him, would be any further drilling? When the war is over he is to join his uncle, an elderly gentleman, who, after having been thirty years on half-pay, was appointed not long ago to the command of an Irish district, and is now about to proceed out to India as commander-in-chief of an Indian Presidency, where he will reign supreme over a native army, of whose language he does not understand one word, in a country he has never so much as read of. In Bombay or Madras he will enjoy a salary of twelve hundred pounds a-year.

Of what use, therefore, can military education be to my friend Charley Benson? He is one of the fortunate men of this world, who, having good interest, need not trouble his head with the why or the wherefore of this or that science. As aide-de-camp, his chief duties are to dress well, carve well, dance well, ride well, help to do the honors of his uncle's house, and occasionally attend that relative to the review or inspection of a regiment. His training for the staff consisted in going through a couple of years' regimental duty with his corps; and, although whilst there he learnt nothing which could be of the slightest advantage to him either as an aide-de-camp or a deputy quartermaster-general, he now finds himself quite on a par with his brother staff-officers as regards any knowledge of his duties.

Nor is he altogether a bad specimen of the English staff-officer. There are some few holding such appointments who have in a certain degree qualified themselves for the post by a couple of years' study at the senior department of the Military College at Sandhurst; but the certificates obtained by these gentlemen never got them on the staff. Their nominations were coincidences, and would have been equally certain had they no qualification whatever. In a work lately published by an officer of the English army, whose character and accomplishments guarantee the truth of what he asserts, the writer states: "I have reason to believe that from eighteen hundred and fifteen to eighteen hundred and fifty-four—a period of thirty-nine years—not one single appointment on the staff of the army has been made in consequence of the officer having graduated at Sandhurst."* And further, the same author informs us that, according to the Army List for May last, twenty-five officers of the Guards hold staff appointments, of whom only five ever studied at Sandhurst, and not one of whom received a first-class certificate.

From another little work on military education,† which was published just before the present war commenced, we learn that out of ninety-one officers employed in the general staff of the army in eighteen hundred and fifty-two, seven only had graduated at the senior department of Sandhurst, and that out of one hundred and seventeen staff-officers of pensioners in the same year, three only had obtained certificates. But a stronger instance of the utter inutility of English officers studying to qualify themselves for the staff has yet to be told. According to a parliamentary return called for during the last session, and published early in the month of May, there were then one hundred and thirty-five officers serving on the staff of the

* Notes on Military Education. By Captain J. Morton Spearman, R.A. London, Parker, 1853.

† The Use and Application of Cavalry in War. By Colonel Beames, late Royal Irish Dragoon Guards. London, T. and W. Boone, 1855. Page 437.

army in the Crimea. Of these only nine had obtained certificates at Sandhurst. Not a single assistant quartermaster-general, nor brigade-major, nor aide-de-camp, had ever graduated at that college; whilst of eleven assistant adjutant-generals, one only had passed through that ordeal,—and amongst twenty-nine deputies of the two staff departments (of the adjutant and quartermaster-general), but five had ever obtained certificates of qualification at the senior department of the military college.

But what is this Senior Department of the Military College? The establishment of the Military College at Sandhurst is divided into two departments; the junior, intended for the education of lads, from thirteen to sixteen years of age, as preparatory to entering the army. What the military college of St. Cyr is to the French service, the junior department at Sandhurst is to the English, with this slight exception,—that whereas the former institution sends forth annually at least a hundred young men fully qualified for commissions in the line, our British establishment turns out about a dozen or fifteen in the same period. At the last half-yearly Sandhurst examinations—in October or November of the year just ended—the number of cadets who passed for commissions was less than half-a-dozen. The reason for this vast difference is, that in France there are but two doors whereby a candidate can enter the commissioned ranks of the army. The one is by enlisting as a private soldier, and rising through all the various subordinate grades to the distinction of wearing the epaulette; the other by commencing and going through the regular course of studies at the military college of St. Cyr. In order to qualify in the latter method, it is necessary to enter that establishment between the ages of twelve and fourteen, and to remain three years learning the duties of the profession, before the candidate can be admitted to the examination.

But I have gone astray from my intention, which was to point out in what consists the senior department of the Military College at Sandhurst. The pupils of this division are all commissioned officers, and by the rules they must, before entering the establishment, have served with their regiment three years abroad, or four years at home. The number is limited to fifteen, which—considering there are in times of peace upwards of ninety officers employed on the staff of the army, and during the present war there are no less than two hundred and fifty—is rather a small proportion; but even so very short a list is seldom full, and but few officers avail themselves of the privilege. Nor can we wonder at it. The English military man is like his fellow-countrymen who follow other pursuits and employment. If he saw that study or application would advance him in his profession, he would work like a horse. If staff

appointments were given to those who had qualified themselves in the senior department of Sandhurst, and if a certificate from that establishment were a sure and certain means of obtaining professional distinction and subsequent promotion, we should in England have in a very few years the best educated staff in the world. When he has an object in view, there is nothing that the Anglo-Saxon will not attempt, and few things he cannot accomplish. Let us not then blame such men as my friend Benson, but rather try all we can to reform a system which is at once a curse to the army and a disgrace to the nation. And here let me relate an anecdote.

Some years ago, the regiment in which I then held a commission, formed part of a very large force, assembled on the North-West frontier of India. For several months this army was together, saw much service, and went through several general actions. Besides a great number of the East India Company's regiments, there were with us two dragoon corps, and eight or ten battalions of the Queen's army. There was also a very numerous staff, belonging to which were a dozen or fourteen officers of her Majesty's service. Of these latter gentlemen, not one had ever been at the senior department of Sandhurst, whilst there were no less than ten officers doing regimental duty with their respective corps in this very force, who had gone through the regular course of study at that establishment, and of these three had taken first-class certificates. Again, I say, let us not blame officers who don't avail themselves of the senior department at Sandhurst to study, but let us insist upon a reformation of the present system.

We all know how elderly officers cry up, and Young England cries down, the heroes, habits, manners, and customs of our army during the Peninsula war. But in the matter of staff officers and their qualifications, the force under Wellesley in Spain was certainly in advance of that commanded by Codrington in the Crimea. According to a military authority I have already quoted,* there was during the Peninsula war "only one officer employed on the quartermaster-general's staff who was not a graduate of the senior department of the Royal Military College." And the same gentleman, writing about a year before the war with Russia broke out, says, "It is by many doubted whether, in the event of a new war, there exists in the British army the necessary materials for the construction of an efficient état-major, or corps of staff officers, such as accompanied the troops under Sir John Abercrombie to Egypt and Sir Arthur Wellesley to Portugal."

Still stronger evidence against the existing

* Notes on Military Education, by Captain Spearman, page 35, note.

system is afforded us a little farther on in the same pamphlet, where Captain Spearman states that, "as an introduction to staff employment, the officers of the army have long since abandoned the senior department at Sandhurst in hopeless despair." The writer then asks "to what is the disinclination, not to say repugnance, so generally evinced by British officers to devote themselves to the study of war as a science to be attributed? Clearly to the want of due encouragement—to the practical denial of the usual reward of such devotion and toil."

"Staff appointments" (in the English army), says Colonel Beamish in his work mentioned above, "are made without any reference to scientific qualification—because the wish of a lord is more potent than the judgment of a professor; and the most distinguished Sandhurst students have been left to look in vain for congenial professional employment, and some reward for their many hours of labour and anxious preparation. . . . How different," continues the same writer, "is the practice with our enlightened neighbours! Staff employment in France is the reward of merit alone. It is sought for by the élite of the army, and obtained only by the severest study, and the most indisputable proofs of the possession of the highest degree of professional excellence and general intelligence. Thus are formed those well-instructed officers who constitute the état-major of the French army, and afterwards become their most distinguished generals of division and brigade."

If more evidence were wanting to show what are considered the necessary qualifications for a staff-officer in the English service, a perusal of the list of lords, honourables, baronets, and sons of wealthy influential commoners, who form the staff of the Crimean army, would be quite enough to set the question at rest. With us interest—as with the French merit—is what the authorities make the *sine qua non* for those who aspire to the staff. The consequence to England has been but too visible since the struggle with Russia commenced. With as brave regimental officers and soldiers as ever were sent forth by this or any other country, our army has never been able to effect half what it would have effected with proper organisation and efficient leaders. In France what the *École Impériale d'Application d'Etat-Major* effects in training for the staff, regimental service does in preparing for the command of brigades, divisions, and armies. With a highly-educated staff it is impossible either to want competent generals, or to have every department of the service in that state of utter confusion which has so sadly distinguished our army since it first embarked for the East. Our general officers, commanders of division, brigadiers, adjutants-general, quartermasters-general, aides-de-camp, and others, are only now commencing to learn

their various military duties with the army. Should peace be proclaimed to-morrow, and Europe enjoy twenty or thirty years' respite from bloodshed, those officers who may then hold commissions in the service will, in the event of war, (our system remaining unchanged: which God forbid!) have in like manner to learn all their duties. In France, on the contrary, the government maintains its officers as we do our muskets or big guns—fit for immediate service in any part of the world.

CHIPS.

THE RUSSIAN BUDGET.

We feel the cost of war, and know that it must be absolutely more expensive to the Russian than it is to our own. How long is the Russian pocket? how strong is the Russian arm? are very natural questions. A German gentleman in the United States, long resident in Russia, has published a report upon the subject not altogether tallying with some other reports that come to us from the Old World by way of the New. The account Mr. Douai gives is nearly to the following effect:

Fifty millions of Russian subjects yield to their Czar not more than a revenue of twenty millions sterling. More cannot be extracted from the people; and, out of this, a large army of soldiers is not, it stands to reason, too liberally paid. Every member of the Russian population, taking one with another, pays eight shillings a year for being ruled imperially, with little or nothing more to pay for local government of any kind. In the same way, every Austrian pays twelve shillings; every Prussian eighteen shillings; every Frenchman forty-four shillings; and every Englishman forty-eight shillings to the resources of the nation, besides considerable sums towards local expenditure. Public expenses suggest, roughly, a nation's wealth, and Russia, judged by this test, is inhabited by a people manifestly poor. Whenever war arises, therefore, the Czar goes abroad to borrow, and there is, every year, a deficiency in the imperial budget. If all the European money-lenders buttoned up their pockets closely, Russian war must cease. How these loan contractors will ever get back more than interest on capital, it is not easy to see; for, if borrowing continues, even the receipt of interest by them may become precarious.

The only direct tax in Russia is the poll tax, yielding less than three-and-a-half millions sterling; add to it the license-duty paid by merchants and tradesmen, and the sum becomes five millions. We speak only of pounds sterling, because the value of sums stated in silver roubles (the national denomination in which Russian accounts are computed) is less clearly perceived. The customs' duties yield five millions more to the

revenue; and these duties fall entirely on the upper classes; as the Russian peasant does not make any appreciable use of foreign goods. Crown estates yield less than three millions and a half; and under the head crown estates are included mines, forests, and gold-washings, with nearly half the estates in the empire, the real annual profit obtained from each crown peasant being not more than three shillings and fourpence. The rest of the imperial revenue is extracted from the sale of brandy.

The Czar is the great brandy-merchant to his people. The brandy trade is his monopoly, and his chief means of livelihood as a potentate. Before he took to the spirit-trade, licenses for the distillation and retailing of brandy used to be always sold to the same persons, who acquired enormous wealth by their transactions. Government, aware of this, reduced their profits by conditions and changes which at last drove out of the market all but those persons who carried on a wholesale business on the largest scale. A few hundred wholesale distilling firms, too deeply concerned in their trade to bring it to a stand-still, carried on their business at the mercy of the emperor; who soon ordered that all brandy produced by the distillers should be sold to the government, which then doubled its quantity with water, and supplied it to licensed dealers for retail sale—of course, after more dilution—at fixed prices to the public. Licenses are sold by auction, and their prices are often run up by agents of the government; so that speculators in them are almost as likely to be ruined as to thrive.

Much has been said of a mysterious treasure belonging to the crown, yearly augmented by a procession of millions of roubles to the vaults of the fortress of Saint Petersburg. Mr. Donai does not believe in this problematical deposit of wealth; because its sources, being such as have been here detailed including borrowed money, cannot accumulate. Borrowers are not usually people whose coffers overflow with millions. The real truth is that the Russian government gets money as savages get fruit, by cutting down the tree; and lives upon capital as well as interest. The loan of last year may have covered the interest of former loans, and perhaps the cost of arms purchased in Belgium; but even that is not certain, for six issues of paper money have already been forced into currency; private contributions have been claimed and urged upon the people from the pulpit with no very great result; and this reminds us that one source of money to the Czar has not been named in the preceding summary. It is the Russian church. There remains the bag of money in the pocket of the church. When, in eighteen hundred and forty-five, the empress was to go to Italy, the clergy paid a contribution of two millions—the price of the forcible conversion of the

peasants in the Baltic provinces. The present war is set forth as a holy war, and the church may be asked fairly to assist in paying for it, and no doubt is asked very perseveringly, and for no small sums. But how heavy is the purse of the Russian church? Its contents used to be valued at twenty-six millions sterling; and, although the holy fathers may contribute even to the last farthing, we unfortunately know that twenty-six millions are soon swallowed up when a great war is being waged.

Thus the case is said to stand as regards money. It is not any better in respect of men. In time of war the Russians do not abhor military service as they do in time of peace; because they are then better treated, and have prospects of advancement. But it appears that the Russians do not make a soldier fit to be led against the enemy until after several years' drilling. Deduct from the Czar's million of men four hundred thousand that can form lines only on paper, and three hundred thousand destroyed in the present struggle, only three hundred thousand old soldiers remain to cover the whole frontier, north, south, east, and west. Another campaign will destroy them nearly all, and there will remain nothing but an army of recruits. Fanaticism may be infused into these by abolishing serfdom, and by other home appeals; but their fighting powers will be very low indeed at the end of another campaign. To urge on the war, therefore, without giving time for a recovery of breath, is to destroy the attacking power of the Russian empire; and all the arts and all the diplomacy at its command—and they are both numerous and skilful—ever have been and ever will be to gain time. Time is, with Russia, nearly synonymous with victory.

Its defensive power nobody is disposed to under-estimate. In this matter, its real weakness gives it, in one sense, special strength. Steppes, swamps, and vast regions almost destitute of roads, a bad climate, a thin population barely civilised that vanishes before approaching hosts and leaves only a desert for the enemy to traverse, are obstacles that exist now as they existed in the days of Pultawa and Moscow. Upon this the Czar reposes his last trust. But every condition of the empire is such as to cause its vital parts to be rather upon its western and southern borders than in its more central parts. Drive the people into the inhospitable interior, and their difficulties of subsistence will be only a little less insurmountable than those of an enemy. Indeed, of the prodigious superficies over which the empire extends—including, as it does, nearly one-seventh part of the terrestrial globe—by far the greatest proportion is uninhabitable to friend or foe. The enormous northern provinces, especially, are destined to perpetual sterility, not only on account of the extreme rigour of the climate, but because nearly all the great

rivers by which they are traversed fall into the Arctic Ocean; and are therefore inaccessible for the whole or a greater part of the year. We may live to see, therefore, that the Muscovite tradition of defence is quite as vain a trust as most of the traditions blindly followed in these days, unless the peace now in course of negotiation be lasting and secure.

The interruption—nay, the paralysis—of commerce occasioned by the present war is another source of exhaustion. Except for ordinary necessities of life, Russia draws her supplies from foreign countries in exchange for raw material produced from the estates of the nobles. She has such endless supplies of timber that to give an idea of some of her forests, it is said, as a specimen, that a squirrel might hop from Saint Petersburg to Moscow from tree to tree without touching the ground, and that she could, under a rational system, afford illimitable tallow, hemp, and oil; but these sources of wealth are impeded and crippled very naturally when nearly every port she possesses along her limited sea-board is blockaded.

A SMALL MONKISH RELIC.

No more than a few months have elapsed since the greatest Greek scholar of the day, the Reverend Doctor Gaisford, late Dean of Christchurch, Oxford, was carried to his last resting-place within the walls of the ancient cathedral over which he had presided so many years. The students of the house, clad in white surplices, preceded the remains of their venerated Dean as the procession passed along the east side of the quadrangle, from the deanery to the cathedral. Great Tom had, by tolling every minute (a thing never done except at the death of the sovereign or the dean), announced the decease; and now a small land-bell, carried in front of the procession by the dean's verger, and tolled every half-minute, announced that the last rites were about to take place.

The cathedral clock struck four; the usual merry peal of bells for evening prayers was silent. We strolled towards the cathedral, and finding a side-door open, walked in. The dull, harsh, and grating sound of the workmen filling up the grave struck heavily on our ears, as it resounded through the body of the church. The mourners were all gone; and alone, at the head of the grave, watching vacantly the busy labourers, stood the white-headed old verger; another hour, the ground would be all levelled, and the stones replaced over the master he had served faithfully so many years.

The verger informed us that the ground now opened had not been moved for two hundred years, and that a dean had not been buried within the precincts of the church for nearly one hundred years. Bearing these facts in mind, we poked about among the earth which had been thrown out of

the grave. We found among the brick-bats and rubbish a few broken portions of human bones, which had evidently been buried very many years; but fastened on to one of the brick-bats we discovered a little bone which we at once pronounced not to be human. It was a little round bone, about the size of a large shirt-stud, from the centre of which projected a longish, tooth-like spine, the end of which still remained as sharp as a needle, and the enamel which covered it still resisted a scratch from a knife. The actual body of the bone was very light and brittle, and a simple test we applied showed that it had been under ground very many years.

The question arose, what was our bone, and how did it get to the place where it was found? It was shown to the greatest authority we have in comparative anatomy, and he immediately pronounced it to be a spine from the back of a very large fish, commonly known as the skate or thornback. This creature has, fixed into the skin of his back in a row along the back of his tail, many very sharp prickles of a tooth-like character, and covered with enamel, just like our specimen. If one of these skin-teeth be cut out from a recent fish, the stud-like knob of bone into which the spine is fixed, will be found, serving to keep this formidable weapon (for such it is) in its proper position; and dreadful blows can Mr. Thornback give with his armed tail in his battles, be they submarine, or be they in the fisherman's boat.

How did the spine of a thornback get into Christchurch Cathedral, into ground that had not been moved for two hundred years? Before the days of Henry the Eighth the precincts, where the college now stands, were occupied by monkish buildings, where monks had many fast-days, and, on these days, were probably great consumers of fish. The supply of fresh-water fish, from the Thames close by, would hardly be equal to the demand. It is therefore probable that they procured salt-water fish, and a thornback is, above all fish, the most likely to have been supplied by the fishmonger.

In an old book on fishes and serpents, we found, unexpectedly, evidence to prove that the skate—a hundred years ago—formed a favourite dish at the high tables of the colleges. The book was published in seventeen hundred and sixty-three, and the passage runs thus: "The skate, or *flaire*, is remarkably large, and will sometimes weigh above one hundred pounds; but what is still more extraordinary, there was one sold by a fishmonger at Cambridge to St. John's College, which weighed two hundred pounds, and dined one hundred and twenty people. The length was forty-two inches, and the breadth thirty-one inches."

The monkish cook—like a cook of the present day—would, probably, skin and cut off the tail of the thornback, when he cooked him for the monks' dinner, and then he would

probably throw both skin and tail, spines and all, into the rubbish-hole outside the kitchen; there they would remain till removed. And, next, when did this removal take place? A curious book—*Collectanea Curiosa*—published at Oxford in seventeen hundred and eighty-one, tells us. In this book there is an article entitled, "Out of the journal book of the expences of all the buildings of Christ Church College, Oxon, which I had of Mr. Pore, of Blechinton."

The second item runs thus: "Spent about the femerell of the new kitchen and sundry gutters pertaining to the same, xvijjs. viij."

Further on we find, "Paid to Thomas Hewister, for carriage of earth and rubble from the fayre gate, and the new stepull to fill the ditches, on the backside of the college, clvj. loads, at a peny the load by computation, xiijs."

Again: "Paid to Mr. David Griffith, Priest, for his stipend for wages, as well for keeping of the monastery of St. Frideswide, and saying of Divine service after the suppression of the same unto the first stalling of the dean and canons in the said college, as for his labours in overseeing the workmen dayly labouring there in all by the space of thirteen months, vij £."

From this evidence it will appear that for a considerable space of time (probably about five years) many alterations were made, and much earth removed from place to place. The cathedral, and, in fact, nearly all the quadrangle—as will appear by comparing their levels with that of the street outside—stand upon made ground. It is probable, therefore, that some of the earth from outside the monkish kitchen, or other rubbish hole, was carted to form the floor of the cathedral, and with it, of course, any rubbish that happened to be there.

This, then, was the fate of our thornback's spine. The thornback was eaten by the monks of St. Frideswide, the spine thrown away, unheeded, unregarded, to be disinterred, after the lapse of more than three hundred years, at the funeral of a college dean, and finally to be honoured by having its history recorded in Household Words.

LITTLE SAINT ZITA.

THERE is a collection of horrible, though admirably executed etchings, by the "noble Jacques Callott," extant, called *Les Saints et Saintes de l'Année*. It is a complete pictorial calendar of the Romish martyrology. No amount of indigestion, caused by suppers of underdone pork-chops; no nightmares, piled one on another; no distempered imaginings of toppers in the worst state of delirium tremens; no visions of men with guilt-laden consciences; could culminate into a tenth part of the horrors that the noble Jacques has perpetuated with his immortal graver. All the refinements of torture, invented by the ruth-

less and cruel pagans, and inflicted by them on the early confessors, are here set down in chiaro oscuro; not a dislocated limb is omitted, not a lacerated muscle is passed over. The whole work is a vast dissecting-room—a fasciculus of scarifications, maimings, and dismemberments—of red-hot pincers, scalding oil, molten lead, gridirons, wire scourges, jagged knives, crowns of spikes, hatchets, poisoned daggers, tarred shirts, and wild beasts.

The blessed saints had a bad time of it for certain. How should we, I wonder, with our pluralities, our Easter-offerings, and regium donum, our scarlet hats and stockings, and dwellings in the gate of Flam; our Exeter Hall meetings and buttered muffins afterwards; our first-class missionary passages to the South Seas, and grants of land and fat hogs from King Wabashongo; our dean and chapter dinners, and semi-military chaplains' uniforms (Oh, last-invented, but not least scorn-worthy of humbugs!); how should we confront the stake, the shambles, and the carnifex, the scourge, the rack, and the amphitheatre? Surely the faith must have been strong, or the legends untrue!

Yet there are more saints than the noble Jacques ever dreamed of in his grim category, crowded as it is. Saint Patrick, if we may credit the Irish legend, had two birth-days; still, the number of saints, all duly canonised, is so great, that the year can scarcely spare them the sixth of a birth-day apiece. Only yesterday, the postman (he is a Parisian postman, and, in appearance, is something between a policeman and a field-marshal in disguise) brought me a deformed little card, on which was pasted an almanac with a whole calendar-full of saints, neatly tied up with cherry-coloured ribbon, accompanying the gift with the compliments of the season, and an ardent wish that the new year might prove *bonne et belle* to me; all of which meant that I should give him two francs, on pain of being denounced to the concierge as a curmudgeon, to the landlord as a penniless lodger, and to the police as a suspicious character. Musing over the little almanac, in the futile attempt to get two francs' worth of information out of it, I found a whole army of saints, of whom I had never heard before, and noticed the absence of a great many who are duly set down in another calendar I possess. Would you believe that neither Saint Giles nor Saint Swithin was to be found in my postman's hagiology—that no mention was made of Saint Waldeburga, or of the blessed Saint Wuthelstan; while on the other hand I found Saint Yon, Saint Fiacre, Saint Ovid, Saint Babylas, Saint Pepin, Saint Ponce, Saint Frisque, Saint Nestor, and Saint Pantaloon? What do we know of these saints in England? Where were Saint Willibald, Saint Winifred, Saint Edward the Confessor, and Saint Dunstan, the nose-tweaker? Nowhere! Yet they

must all have their days, their eyes, and feasts. Where, above all, was my little Saint Zita?

If one of the best of Christian gentlemen—the kindly humourist, who wrote the *In-goldsby Legends*—could tell us, without scandal to his cloth or creed, the wondrous stories of Saint Gengulphus and Saint Odille, Saint Anthony and Saint Nicholas, shall I be accused of irreverence, if, in my own way, I tell the legend of little Saint Zita? I must premise that the first discovery of the saintly tradition is due to M. Alphonse Karr, who has a villa at Genoa, the birth-place of the saint herself.

I have no memory for dates, and have no printed information to go upon, so I am unable to state the exact year, or even century, in which Saint Zita flourished. But I know that it was in the dark ages, and that the Christian religion was young, and that it was considerably more than one thousand five hundred years ago.

Now, Pomponius Cotta (I give him that name because it is a sounding one—not that I know his real denomination) was a noble Roman. He was one of the actors in that drama which Mr. Gibbon of London and Lausanne so elegantly described some centuries afterwards: *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. It must have been a strange time, that *Decline and Fall*. Reflecting upon the gigantic, overgrown, diseased civilisation of the wonderful empire, surrounded and preyed upon by savage and barbarous Goths and Visigoths, Vandals, Dacians, and Pannonians, I cannot help picturing to myself some superannuated old noble, accomplished, luxurious, diseased and depraved—learned in bon-mots and scandalous histories of a former age, uselessly wealthy, corruptly cultivated, obsoletely magnificent, full of memories of a splendid but infamous life, too old to reform, too callous to repent, cynically presaging a deluge after him, yet trembling lest that deluge should come while he was yet upon the stage, and wash his death-bed with bitter waters; who is the sport and mock, the unwilling companion and victim unable to help himself, of a throng of rough, brutal, unpolished youngsters—hobbedelohys of the new generation—who carouse at his expense, smoke tobacco under his nose, borrow his money, slap him on the back, and call him old fogey behind it, sneer at his worn-out stories, tread on his gouty toes, ridicule his obsolete politeness, and tie crackers to the back of his coat collar. Have you not seen the decline and fall of the human empire? So men and empires have alike their decadence.

But Pomponius Cotta never recked, it is very probable, of such things. He might have occasionally expressed his belief, like some noble Romans of our own age and empire, that the country was going to the bad; but he had large revenues, which he

spent in a right noble and Roman manner; and he laid whatever ugly misgivings he had in a red sea of Falernian and Chianian (if, indeed, all the stock of those celebrated brands had not already been drunk out by the thirsty Visigoths and Vandals). He had the finest house in Genoa; and you who know what glorious palaces the city of the Dorias and the Spinolas can yet boast of, even in these degenerate days, may form an idea of what marvels of marble, statuary, frescos, and mosaics owned Pomponius Cotta for lord, in the days when there was yet a Parthenon at Athens and a Capitol at Rome.

The noble Pomponius was a Christian, but I am afraid in a very slovenly, lukewarm, semi-pagan sort of way. As there are yet in France some shrivelled old good-for-nothings whose sympathies are with Voltaire and d'Alembert—who sigh for the days of the *Encyclopedie*, the *Esprits-ferts*, and the Baron d'Holbach's witty, wicked suppers, so Pomponius furtively regretted the old bad era before creation heard the voice that cried out that the good Pan was dead*—the days when there were mysteries and oracles, sacrifices and haruspices, Lares and Penates, and when laziness and lust, dishonesty and superstition, were reduced into systems, and dignified with the name of philosophy. So Pomponius half believed in the five thousand gods he had lost, and was but a skin-deep worshipper of the One left. As for his wife, the Domina Flavia Pomponia, she came of far too noble a Roman family, was far too great a lady, thought far too much of crimping her tresses, perfuming her dress, painting her face, giving grand entertainments, and worrying her slaves, to give herself to piety and the practice of religion; and though Onesimus, that blessed though somewhat unclean hermit, did often come to the Pomponian house and take its mistress roundly to task for her mundane mode of life, she only laughed at the good man; quizzed his hair, shirt, and long thickly-peopled beard; and endeavoured to seduce him from his hermit fare of roots and herbs and spring-water, by pressing invitations to partake of dainty meals and draughts of hot wine.

I am not so uncharitable as to assume that all the seven deadly sins found refuge in the mansion of Pomponius Cotta, but it is certain that it was a very fortalice and citadel for one of them—namely, gluttony. There never were such noble Romans (out of Guild-hall) as the Pomponii for guzzling and guttling, banqueting, junketing, feasting, and carousing. It was well that plate glass was not invented in those times, for the house was turned out of windows regularly every day, and the major part of the Pomponian

* This is one of the earliest traditions of the Christian era. That at midnight on the first Christmas-Eve a great voice was heard all over the world, crying "The God Pan is dead." Milton bursts into colossal melody on this key-note in his magnificent Christmas hymn.

revenues would have been expended in glaziers' bills. But there were dinners and suppers and after-suppers. The guests ate till they couldn't move, and drank till they couldn't see. Of course they crowned themselves with flowers, and lolled upon soft couches, and had little boys to titillate their noses with rare perfumes, and pledged each other to the sounds of dulcet music; but they were an emerited set of gormandisers for all that, and richly deserved the visitation of the stern Nemesis that sate ever in the gate in the shape of the fair-haired barbarian, with the brand to burn, the sword to slay, and the hands to pillage. Or, like the Philistine lords, they caroused and made merry, unwotting of that stern, moody, blind Samson, sitting apart, yonder, with his hair all a-growing, and soon to arise in his might and pull the house down on their gluttonous heads. Or, like Belshazzar's feasters, they were drunk in vessels of gold and silver, while the fingers of a man's hand were writing on the wall, and the Medes and Persians were at the gate.

It may easily be imagined that in such a belly-god temple—such a house of feasting and wassail—the cook was a personage of great power and importance. Pomponius Cotta had simply the best cook not only in Genoa, but in Magna Græcia—not only in Magna Græcia, but in the whole Italian peninsula. But no man-cook had he—no haughty, stately, magister coquinae, no pedant in Apicius or bigoted believer in Lucullus. Yet Pomponius was proud and happy in the possession of a culinary treasure—a real *cordon-bleu*, a Mrs. Glasse of the dark ages, a Miss Acton of antiquity, a Mrs. Rumball of Romanity; and this was no other than a little slave girl whom they called Zita.

We have all heard of the cook who boasted that he could serve up a leathern shoe in twenty-seven different phases of sauce and cookery. I never believed in him, and always set him down as a vapouring fanfaroon—a sort of copper-stewpan captain of cookery. But I have a firm belief that little Zita would have made everything out of anything or nothing culinary; that her stewed pump-handles would have been delicious, her salmi of bath-brick exquisite, her croquettes of Witney blanket unapproachable, her back hair *en papillote* a dish fit for a king. She cooked such irresistible dishes for the noble Pomponius that he frequently wept, and would have given her her freedom had he not been afraid that she would be off and be married; that the noble Domina Pomponia was jealous of her, and would have led her a sorry life, had she dared to cross her husband; that the guests of the Pomponian house wrote bad sapphics and dactylics in her praise, and would have given her necklaces of pearl and armlets of gold for gifts, but that the Roman finances were in rather an embarrassed condition

just then, and that poor trust was dead with the Genoese jewellers.

Little Zita was very pretty; she must have been pretty—and she was. She was as symmetrical as one of Pradier's *Bacchantes*—as ripe and blooming as the grapes they press; but as pure as the alabaster of which they are made. Her complexion was as delicately, softly tinted as one of Mr. Gibson's Anglo-Roman statues; her long hair, when she released it from its confining fillet, hung down about her like a king's mantle; she had wrists and ankles that only gold or gems were worthy to embrace: she had a mouth like a Cupid's bow, and eyes like almonds dyed in ebony; and teeth that were the gates of ivory of the dreams of love, and nails like mother of pearl. She danced like *Arbuscula*, and sang like *Galeria Copiola*; and she cooked, like an angel—as she is.

None could serve up in such style the great standard dishes of Roman cookery. The wild boar of Troy, with honey, oil, flour and garum; the Campanian sow, fed from golden troughs, stuffed with chestnuts and spices, and brought to table whole with her nine little sucking pigs disposed around her in sweet sauce; the *vol au vents* of peacocks' tongues, and ortolans' eyes, and becafcacos' brains. Yet, though great in these, she excelled in fanciful, ravishing, gem-like dishes—in what the French call “surprises”—in culinary epigrams, edible enigmas, savoury fables, poems that you could eat and drink. She had sauces, the secrets of which have gone to Paradise with her; she had feats of *legerdmain* in compounding dishes that no life-long apprenticeship could teach. And, withal, she was so saving, so economical, so cleanly in her arrangements, that her kitchen was like a street in the clean village of Brook (I should not like to pass half an hour even in Velour's kitchen); and her noble master had the satisfaction of knowing that he gave the mightiest “spreads” in Genoa at anything but an unreasonable or ruinous expense.

She was as honest as a child's smile, and was as regardless of kitchen stuff, perquisites, Christmas boxes from tradesmen, and the dangerous old crones who hung about the area and cried hare-skins, as your own cook, madam, I hope may be. And, above all, little Zita had no followers, had boxed the major-domo's ears for offering her a pair of fillagree ear-rings, and was exceeding pious.

Now, a pious cook is not considered, in these sceptical days, as a very great desideratum. A pious cook not unfrequently refuses to cook a Sunday's dinner, and entertains a serious grenadier on Sunday evening. I have seen many a kitchen drawer in which the presence of a hymn-book, and the “Cook's Spiritual Comforter” (price ninepence per hundred for distribution) did not exclude the company of much surreptitious

cold fat and sundry legs of fowls that were not picked clean. Serious cooks occasionally wear their mistresses' black silk stockings to go to chapel in; my aunt had a serious cook who drank; and there is a legend in our family of a peculiarly evangelical cook who could not keep her hands off other people's pomatum. But little Zita was sincerely, unfeignedly, cheerfully, devotedly pious. She did not neglect her duties to pray: she rose up early in the morning before the cock crew, while her masters were sunk in drunken sleep, and prayed for herself and for them, then went to her daily labour with vigorous heart of grace. There are some of us who pray, as grudgingly performing a certain duty, and doing it, but no more—some of us as an example (and what an example!) to others—some through mere habit (and those are in a bad case)—some (who shall gainsay it?) in hypocrisy; but do we not all, Scribes and Pharisees, Publicans and Sinners, number among our friends, among those we know, some few good really pious souls who strike us with a sort of awe and reverent respect; who do their good deeds before we rise, or after we retire to rest; creep into heaven the back way, but are not the less received there with trumpets and crowns of glory?

Such was little Saint Zita. She was, I have said, truly pious. In an age when there was as yet but one Ritual, before dissent and drums ecclesiastic existed, Zita thought it her bounden duty to abide by and keep all the fasts and festivals of the church as ordained by the bishops, priests, and deacons. For she was not book-learned, this poor little cook-maid, and had but these three watchwords for a rule of conduct—Faith, Duty, and Obedience.

It is in the legend that she would decoy the little white-haired, blue-eyed children of the barbarian soldiers into her kitchen, and there, while giving them sweetmeats and other goodies, teach them to lisp little Latin prayers, and tell over the rosary, and kiss the crucifix appended to it. And she would have assuredly have fallen under the grave displeasure of the heaven-born SIR ROBERT W. CARDEN, and have been specially pointed at in his proposed Act of Parliament for making almsgiving penal, since she bestowed the major part of her wages in gifts to beggars, unmindful whether they were christian or pagan; and, for a certainty, the strong-minded would have sneered at her, and the wearers of phylacteries would have frowned on her, for she thought it a grave sin to disobey the edict of the church that forbade the eating of flesh on Friday and other appointed fasts. Pomponius Cotta, it must be acknowledged, was troubled with no such scruples. He would have rated his cook soundly, and perchance scourged her, if she had served him up meagre fare on the sixth day of the week; yet I find it in the legend that little Zita was enabled by her own skill,

and, doubtless, by celestial assistance, to perpetrate a pious fraud upon this epicurean Roman. The Fridays' dinners were as rich and succulent, and called forth as loud encomia as those of the other days, yet not one scrap of meat, one drop of carnal gravy, did Zita employ in the concoction thereof. Fish, and eggs, and divers mushrooms, truffles and ketchups, became, in the hands of the saintly cook, susceptible of giving the most meaty flavours. 'Tis said that Zita invented burnt onions—those grand culinary deceptions! And though they were in reality making meagre, as good Christians should do, Pomponius and his boon companions thought they were feasting upon venison and poultry and choice roasts. This is one of the secrets that died with Saint Zita. I never tasted sorrel soup that had even the suspicion of a flavour of meat about it; and though I have heard much of the rice fritters and savoury soups of the Lancashire vegetarians, I doubt much of their ability to conceal the taste of the domestic cabbage and the homely onion.

Now it fell out in the year of redemption—I have not the slightest idea—that P. Mauremnus Citronius Ostendius, a great gastronome and connoisseur in oysters, came from Asia to visit his kinsman Pomponius. There was some talk of his marrying the beautiful Flavia Pomponilia, the eldest daughter of the Pomponian house (she was as jealous of Zita as Fleur de Lys was of Esmeralda, and would have thrust golden pins into her, à-la-mode Romaine, but for fear of her father); but at all events Ostendius was come down from Asia to Genoa, and there was to be a great feast in honour of his arrival. Ostendius had an aldermanic abdomen under his toga, had a voice that reminded you of fruity port, bees-wings in his eyes, a face very like collared brawn, and wore a wig. Those adjuncts to beauty were worn, ladies and gentlemen, fifteen hundred years ago. Ay! look in at the Egyptian Room of the British Museum, London, and you shall find wigs older than that. He had come from Asia, where he was reported to have partaken of strange dishes—birds of paradise, gryphons, phoenixes, serpents, elephants—what do I know but he despised not the Persicos apparatus, and was not a man to be trifled with in his victuals! Pomponius Cotta called his cook into his sanctum, and gave her instructions as to the banquet, significantly telling her what she might expect if she failed in satisfying him and his gastronomical guests. Poor Zita felt a cold shudder as she listened to the threats which, in lazy Latin, her noble master lavished upon her. But she determined, less through fear of punishment than a sincere desire of doing her duty, to exert herself to the very utmost in the preparation of the feast. Perhaps there may have been a little spice of vanity in this determination; perhaps she was actuated by a

little harmless desire to please the difficult Ostendius, and so prove to him that Pomponius Cotta had a slave who was the best cook in Genoa and in Italy. Why not? I am one who, believing that all is vanity, think that the world as it is could not well get on without some vanity. By which I mean an honest moderate love of and pleasure in approbation. I think we could much easier dispense with money than with this. When I see a conceited man, I think him to be a fool; but when I meet a man who tells me he does not rejoice when he is praised for the good book he has written, or the good picture he has painted, or the good deed he has done, I know him to be a humbug, and a mighty dangerous one to his fellow-creatures.

Flowers, wax torches, perfumes, rich tapestries, cunning musicians—all were ordered for the feast to the guest who was come from Asia. The piscator brought fish in abundance; the lignarius brought wood and charcoal to light the cooking furnaces withal; the venator brought game and venison; the sartor stitched unceasingly at vestments of purple and fine linen; the slaves who fed ordinarily upon salsamentum or salt meat revelled in blithe thoughts of the rich fragments that would fall to their share on the morrow of the banquet. It need scarcely be said that Zita the cook had a whole army of cook's mates, scullions, marmitons, plate-scrappers, and bottle-washers under her command. These peeled the vegetables, these jointed the meat, these strained the soups and jellies; but to none did she ever confide the real cooking of the dinner. Her spoon was in every casserole, her spatula in every sauce-boat; she knew the exact number of mushrooms to every gratin, and of truffles to every turkey. Believe me—in the works of great artists there is little vicarious handiwork. Asses say that Mr. Stanfield painted the scenery of Acis and Galatea by means of a speaking-trumpet from the shilling gallery, his assistants working on the stage. Asses say that Carême used to compose his dinners reclining on a crimson velvet couch, while his nephew mixed the magic ingredients in silver stewpans. Asses say that all the hammering and chiselling of Praxiteles' statues were done by workmen, and that the sculptor only polished up the noses and finger tips with a little marble dust. Don't believe such tales. In all great works the master hand is every where.

On the morning of the banquet, early, Zita went to market, and sent home stores of provisions, which her assistants knew well how to advance through their preparatory stages. Then, knowing that she had plenty of time before her, the pious little cook—though she had already attended matins—went to church to have a good pray. In the simplicity of her heart, she thought she would render up special thanks for all the

good dinners she had cooked, and pray as specially that this evening's repast should be the very best and most succulent she might ever prepare. You see she was but a poor, ignorant, little slave-girl, and she lived in the dark ages.

Zita went to church, heard high mass, confessed, and then, going into a little dark chapel by herself, fell down on her knees before the mother of all virgins, the Queen of Heaven. She prayed, and prayed, and prayed so long, so earnestly, so devoutly, that she quite forgot how swiftly the hours fleet by, how impossible it is to overtake them. She prayed and prayed till she lost all consciousness and memory of earthly things, of earthly ties and duties, till the vaulted roof seemed to open, till she seemed to see, through a golden network, a sky of lapis-lazuli all peopled with angelic beings in robes of dazzling white; till she heard soft sounds of music such as could only proceed from harps played by celestial hands; till the statue of the Queen of Heaven seemed to smile upon her and bless her; till she was no longer a cook and a slave, but an ecstatic in communion with the saints.

She prayed till the mortal sky without, from the glare of noonday took soberer hues; till the western horizon began to blush for Zita's tardiness; till the great blue Mediterranean sea grew purple, save where the sunset smote it; till the white palaces of Genoa were tinged with pink, as if the sky had rained roses. She prayed till the lazy dogs which had been basking in the sun rose and shook themselves and raised their shiftless eyes as if to wonder where the sun was; till the barbarian soldiers, who had been lounging on guerd-house benches, staggered inside, and fell to dicing and drinking; till hired assassins woke up on their straw pallets, and, rubbing their villanous eyes, began to think that it was pretty nearly time to go a murdering; till cut-purses' fingers began to itch premonitorily; till maidens watched the early moon, and longed for it to be sole sovereign of the heavens, that the trysting-time might come; till the young spendthrift rejoiced that another day was to come, and the old sage sighed that another day was gone; till sick men quarrelled with their nurses for closing their casements, and the birds grew drowsy, and the flowers shut themselves up in secrecy, and the frog began to speak to his neighbour, and the glow-worm lighted his lamp.

She prayed till it was dusk, and almost dark, till the vesper bell began to ring, when she awoke from out her trance, and not a dish of the dinner was cooked.

And she hurried home, weeping, ah! so bitterly. For Zita knew her duty towards her neighbour as the road towards Heaven. She knew that there were times for all things, and that she had prayed too much and too long. Punishment she did not so much dread as

the reproaches of her own conscience for the neglect of her duty. At length, faltering and stumbling in the momentarily increasing darkness, she reached the Pomponian house, which was all lighted up from top to bottom. "Ah!" thought she, "the major domo has, at least, attended to his business." She hurried into a small side court-yard where the kitchen was, and there she found all her army of assistants: the cook's mates, the scullions, the marmitons, the plate-scrapers, and the bottle-washers, all fast asleep, with their ladles, their knives, and their spits on benches and door-steps and in corners. "Ah!" cried little Zita, wringing her hands; "waiting for me, and quite worn out with fatigue!" Then, stepping among them without awakening them, she approached the great folding-doors of the kitchen, and tried the handle; but the doors were locked, and through the keyholes and hinges, the chinks and crannies of the portal, there came a rich, powerful, subtle odour, as of the best dinner that ever was cooked. She thought she understood it all. Enraged at her absence, her master had sent for Maravilla, the corpulent female cook of Septimius Pylorus, his neighbour, to prepare the dinner, or, perhaps, the great P. Maremnus Citronius Ostendius had himself condescended to assume the cook's cap and apron, and was at that moment engaged within, with locked doors, in blasting her professional reputation for ever. She was ruined as a cook, a servant—a poor little fatherless girl, with nought but her virtue and her cookery for a dower. Unhappy little Zita!

She ran back, through the court-yard to the great banquetting saloon, and there, lo, she found the table decked, and the soft couches ranged, the flowers festooned, the rich tapestries hanging, and the perfumes burning in golden censers. And there, too, she found the proud Domina Pomponia, in gala raiment, who greeted her with a smile of unwonted benevolence, saying:

"Now, Zita, the guests are quite ready for the banquet; and I am sure, from the odour which we can smell even here, that it will be the very best dinner that ever was cooked."

Then came from an inner chamber the fruity port-wine voice of Ostendius, crying,

"Ay, ay, I am sure it will be the very best dinner that ever was cooked;" and the voice of Pomponius Cotta answered him gaily, that "Little Zita was not the best cook in Genoa for nothing," and that he would not part with her for I don't know how many thousand sesterces. Poor Zita saw in this only a cruel jest. For certain another cook had been engaged in her place, and she herself would be had up after the banquet, taunted with its success, confronted with her rival, and perhaps scourged to death amid the clatter of drinking-cups. Her eyes

blinded with tears, she descended again to the court-yard, and fervently, though despairingly, breathed one brief prayer to our Lady of the Chapel. She had scarcely done so, when the great folding-doors of the kitchen flew open, and there issued forth a tremendous cloud of ambrosial vapour, radiant, golden, roseate, azure, in which celestial odours were mingled with the unmistakeable smell of the very best dinner that ever was cooked. And lo! hovering in the cloud, the rapt eye of little Saint Zita seemed to descry myriads of little airy figures in white caps and jackets, even like unto cooks, but who all had wings and little golden knives at their girdles. And she heard the same soft music that had stolen upon her ears in the chapel; and as the angelic cooks fluttered out of the kitchen, it seemed as though each little marmiton saluted the blushing cheek of the trembling saint with a soft and soothing kiss.

At the same time the army of earthly cook's assistants awoke as one scullion, and without so much as yawning, took their places at the dresser-board, and composedly began to dish the dinner. And little Zita, hurrying from furnace to furnace, and lifting up the lids of casserole and bain-marie pan, found, done to a turn, a dinner even such as she with all her culinary genius would never have dreamt of.

Of course it was a miracle. Of course it was the very best dinner ever dressed: what else could it have been with such cooks? They talk of it to this day in Genoa; though I am sorry to say the Genoese cooks have not profited by the example, and do not seek to emulate it. They have the best macaroni, and dress it worse than any people in Europe.

The legend ought properly to end with a relation of how Pomponius Cotta gave his little cook her freedom, how the guests loaded her with presents, and how she married the major domo, and was the happy mother of many good cooks and notable housewives. But the grim old monkish tradition has it, that little Zita died a virgin, and, alas, a martyr! But she was canonised at her death; and even as St. Crispin looks after the interests of cobblers, and St. Barbe has taken artillerymen under his special patronage, so the patroness of cooks has ever been little Saint Zita.

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THE GREAT HOTEL QUESTION.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

HOTEL nuisance, Mr. Albert Smith calls it, discoursing of English hostleries. But I say, Question, thinking the point moot.

There are not many men so thoroughly well qualified and entitled as Mr. Albert Smith is to advance an opinion (and in a cathedral manner, too) upon the three subjects obviously evolved from the Great Hotel Question; namely,—travelling, comfort, and cheapness. As a traveller, Mr. Smith must be intimately acquainted with every considerable hotel in Europe; from Misséris, at Constantinople, to the Hôtel de Londres, at Chamounix, which last appertains to him of course in fee, and of right as an appanage to his kingdom of Mont Blanc. It is barely possible that one or two queens' messengers, a few commercial travellers, and an occasional sketching correspondent of the Illustrated London News may have surpassed the gentleman arrayed in the robe of ice, and crowned, long ago, with the diadem of snow, in the way of mere mileage; but it would be difficult to find any rolling stone that has gathered so much instructive and amusing moss as Mr. Albert Smith. His polyglot vocabulary of hotel signs must be of a nature to drive a countess's courier to despair; and his passport must be viséd and réviséd, till not a square inch of the original blank paper remains.

Of the second subject—travelling—I would conceive him to be as excellent a judge as Mr. Clark, in his watchbox is, of the performances of the long-legged "cracks" at Newmarket, if we may take as evidence the Albertian conversion of the Mont Blanc room, at the Egyptian Hall (that former unsightly home for living skeletons, Hottentot Venuses, and Tom Thumb dwarfs) into the snuggest and most elegant apartment, replete with appliances for seeing, hearing, and enjoying a pleasant and rational entertainment. As for cheapness, who does not recollect Mr. Albert Smith's lively Reminiscences of a Cheap Tour? I forget how much he went to Milan and back for; but the sum total was something astounding in the annals of fiscal moderation. I remember, however, one passage, in which tact and generalship were admirably displayed. Jour-

neying through Switzerland—unless I am mistaken—a halt took place, and the majority of the travellers adjourned to dine at the table-d'hôte. Now, this Mr. Albert Smith knew or surmised to be indifferent in quality, and extravagant in price. What did he do? Why, instead of dining at the hotel, he went out and bought a pie and a bottle of wine; and, while his companions were disbursing their five or six francs for a bad and dear dinner, he was enjoying his simple but succulent repast in view of the most delightful scenery in Europe. There is a profundity of viatorial experience and knowledge of the world in this performance that calls to my remembrance the act of another sage; who, eschewing the expensive bill of fare of some mediæval banquet, retired into a corner,—likewise with a pie,—and being rewarded for his abstinence and savoir-vivre, with the discovery of a rich and rare plum in the pasty's doughy depths, could not refrain from an expression of self-gratulation. Need I mention the lamented name of Horner?

But one cannot always dine on a meat-pie, especially in London streets, nor sleep on an iceberg: we must have hotels, hotel dinners and beds; and, seriously, this paper owes its composition to the perusal of a very succinct and sensible pamphlet on "English Hotels, and their Abuses" by the kindly and keenly observant writer to whom I have just made allusion.

What is an hotel? I don't mean in the Dictionary sense of the word: Ignoramus can tell me that without book (what a magnificent Dictionary all that Ignoramus knows, and all that he doesn't know, would make!) but what is an hotel in this year of grace, civilisation and perfection? What is it like—this mansion of mine, where I (and Mr. Albert Smith) expect to take mine ease, without having my pocket picked;—the place where, the poet tells us, the traveller often finds his warmest welcome; where I have to sleep, and eat, and drink, and pay, and be received by landlords, and "yes-sired" by waiters till the railway of life issues no more time-bills and the terminus is gained? To what degree of perfection have we—ceaselessly rushing about the world, ceaselessly writing letters to the Times, ceaselessly adopting new systems,

ceaselessly clamouring for comfort and cheapness—been able to bring the establishment in which we pass so large a portion of our restless lives. What is an hotel in eighteen hundred and fifty-six ?

The hotel in Paris, what is that like ? I think it is a huge barrack of a place, no one knows exactly how many storeys high ; because no one knows where the servants and waiters sleep ; their beds being always some flights above the loftiest occupied by any of the lodgers : far, far above the *cinquième*. If ever you pass the palace of the Tuileries by night, and watch the lights glimmering from little casements one above another—still ascending, coruscating the slated roof, mingling with the chimney-pots, and at last shouldering the stars in the sky almost, and winking at them as if in companionship—you will be able to form an idea of the number of storeys a first-class Paris hotel consists of. It must be more crowded than a palace (though occupying less space), since it frequently lodges a king or two on the first-floor, a sovereign duke on the second, and a Kamschatkan ambassador on the ground-floor, all with their respective suites ; and, in addition to the regular hotel-lodgers fugacious and permanent, the hairdresser, the tailor, and the boot-maker, who are announced to have their place of business *dans l'hôtel*. The building includes, of course, a vaste *jardin*, a spacious court-yard, coach-houses and stables for the carriages and studs of the wandering English nobility ; a suite of apartments for the landlord and his family ; a smaller set for that dweller on the threshold, the lodge-keeper and his family ; a long range of kitchens and offices ; the public saloon for *table-d'hôtes* (always advertised as the biggest in Paris), and, indispensably, a complete hummums or pile of buildings devoted to hot and cold baths.

All this is in a narrow street with no perceptible frontage, and hemmed in by tall houses, always threatening to topple over, always being pulled down by the authorities, and always, of course, *Pour cause de prolongation de la Rue de Rivoli*. The vast garden is hemmed in by other tall houses ; the hot and cold baths have an entrance in an alley, seemingly half-a-dozen streets off ; and, when you have walked a few hundred yards in another direction, and turned to the right and the left, and think you are on your way to the Seine, you look up, and see a great blank wall staring behind a barricade of chimney-pots, and stencilled high up, somewhere about the seventh heaven, that this is the *Grand Hôtel des Empereurs Chinois* ; which you thought you had got rid of, but which you can't get rid of, and which follows you about and pervades all Paris.

The number of clocks (all gilt, and with pedestals representing groups from the *Iliad* or the *Æneid*, and all with thin-blown glass

cases, which the chamberman breaks with the handle of his feather-broom, and you are charged a hundred francs in the bill, for not breaking)—the number of clocks, I say, is simply incalculable ; because every apartment, from the drawing-room of the Kamschatkan ambassador on the ground-floor, to the undiscoverable sky-parlours in the roof, occupied by the scullions and floor-polishers, has its clock on the mantelpiece. None of these clocks keep any time, save their own ; which is a distracting, inconsistent, and hideous mockery of chronology. They make unearthly noises in the night season ; sometimes as if they had swollen tonsils, sometimes as though they were possessed by demons in their inner works. Invariably—at unseasonable times when you are in bed, and falling in or out of a refreshing sleep—the door is opened to give entrance to an unexpressive man in a black velvet cap, who scrutinises you with a half-complimentary expression, as if you were a new-found acquaintance : half disparagingly—as if he were a broker come to take stock of your personal effects ; but, on the whole, authoritatively, as if he knew that you owed or must owe him money, and he had your comfort and your luggage in his hands. This individual, armed with a great iron instrument of torture, proceeds to wind up the clock ; which doesn't seem to like the operation at all, and moans piteously ; then the mysterious operator shuffles out on his carpet-slippers, and the clock goes worse than ever ; and you catch the next flying waiter who brushes past your door ; and, asking him who the clock-torturer is, are told that it is *Monsieur, by blue !* who is a sergeant in the national guard, a great frequenter of cafés, an ardent speculator on the Bourse, a revered authority at dominos, and a complete nonentity and cipher standing for zero in the house of which he is landlord and proprietor.

Yes, he is the landlord : although hitherto you have been accustomed to regard as the supreme authority of the establishment, *Madame*, the dressy young matron, in the gold chain and ribbons, who sits down-stairs in the rose-wooded and pier-glassed bureau, with a white-headed grandmother, probably ninety years old, on one side, and a blooming *jeune personne* demure, (precisely dressed ; pretty and speechless) on the other,—a young person who works interminable *crochet*, and makes out endless bills of indictment against travellers, arraigning them for their culpable consumption of wax-candles and beetroot-sugar ; patiently awaiting the time when she shall be claimed by some other clock-winder, domino-loving and café-hunting ; and, with her hundred thousand francs of dowry, go to occupy the bureaucratic throne of some other hotel.

French hotel landlords seldom appear to you under any other guise than this. They wind up your clocks, and you see them no more till

you don't pay your bill; when they pursue you with the rigour of the law, and arrest you. I knew one landlord in one of the state-liest hotels in Paris who deviated from this rule. He was—no other term more refined, less idiomatic will serve—an out-and-out swell. He had his brougham, from which I have often seen him stepping at the doors of expensive restaurants and boulevard shops, accompanied by a lady in velvet, erinoline, ringlets, and jewels, followed by a little dog in a paletôt, and who was not the lady in ribbons whom I have seen in the bureau. He used to breakfast at a table by himself in the grande salle-à-manger, and drink the very best of wines, call off the waiter who was attending on me, and behaved just as if he were a real traveller who paid his bill. I met him one night in the orchestra-stalls of the Théâtre Français; he was attired like the Muscovite proprietor of many thousand serfs of the Ukraine; and he looked at me with a vague superciliousness, as if it had occurred to him, mentally, "I must have seen that (ça) somewhere before; he may be, perhaps, one of the wandering aliens to whom I condescended to give hospitality in my palatial hotel; but, at all events, that is evidently a thing of very little consequence; has probably come to the theatre with an order, and I need not trouble myself as to whom that may be."

It may, perhaps, have been a judgment upon this exceptional landlord that he failed shortly afterwards, and for something huge in the way of thousands of francs. An arrangement of a separation from bed and board description took place between him and the legitimate proprietor of the ribbons, and he was so reduced that he was obliged to become chairman of an assurance company or director of a railway, or something penurious of that sort.

This is the great Paris Hotel—with its suites upon suites of rooms; its gilded and painted and satin-hung saloons for kings and ambassadors; its mean little slices of bedchambers for bachelors and dependents (narrow make-shift apartments with beds in alcoves) beds with delightful spring mattresses that send you up ceiling-wards, like Jack in the box, and sometimes tilt you on to the floor playfully; which floor, being beeswaxed and varnished to the polish of a mirror, affords you admirable opportunities for studying the art of in-door skating. You have a little scrap of carpet, seemingly torn from the bottom of a defunct Eastern Counties' Railway carriage; unsubstantial chairs, clad in red velvet,—of course, a really comfortable arm-chair; a most uncomfortable table, if you wish to write, for it is all legs and cross-bars and has no available top; a horrible little gulf, misnamed a fire-place; where you incur sciatica in kneeling down to light the fire, and disease of the lungs in blowing the damp green wood. Perhaps, you succeed at last—after a despairing expenditure of time,

patience, and fuel, and pulling up and down a little iron screen, or blower, which has the perversity of five thousand female imps, and sometimes will descend, and more frequently will see you at Jericho first—in kindling a diminutive, sputtering little blaze, the major part of which goes up the chimney (and often sets it on fire), while the remainder deposits a modicum of caloric on the toes of your boots, and sends a momentary thaw to the tip of your frost-bitten nose once in a dozen hours. You have a chest of drawers, with a grand mahogany top, but with all the rest sham—sham keys, sham drawers (to judge by their obstinate refusal to open), sham locks, and especially sham handles; which last artfully pretend to give you a good purchase to pull open a drawer, and then come off, sarcastically, in your hands, and throw you backward. These interesting articles of furniture are plentifully provided with skirtings, bronze cornices, and sham veneering work, which tumbles off of its own accord to your destruction, and for which you are made to pay.

With a nicely damped ceiling; with partition-walls just thick or thin enough for you to hear your next-door neighbour every time he turns in bed, and for you to have the agreeable certainty that he has heard every word of your ill-tempered soliloquy on the subject of the fire; with a wash-hand basin not much bigger than a pie-dish; an ewer about the size of a pint pot, and two towels almost equalling, in superficial area and variety of hue of ironmould, the pocket handkerchiefs on which the flags of all nations are printed—(by this hand the very vast majority of continental hotel-keepers have not yet modified their views on the quantity of water necessary for purposes of ablution!*) with a little dark dressing closet, utterly useless from its obscurity for any toilette purposes, but which is full of clothes' pegs, gloomily tempting Miserrimus, who has but one coat, to hang himself on one of the vacant pegs; with in all seasons an insufficient quantity of sheets and blankets—the former of strange texture and full of ribbed seams; the latter a sleezy, cobwebby, hairy genus of coverlets, bearing very little resemblance to the stern but serviceable British Witney—with windows that never shut properly, and gauzy curtains that wave to and fro in the draughts like banshees; with a delightful door, which if you happen to shut by accident from the outside, leaving the key inside, can never be opened till the locksmith—who most probably has his logement also dans l'hôtel—is summoned and fee'd to pick the lock; with never the shadow of a portmanteau stool; with very seldom even an apology for a foot-bath; but always with two gleaming wax-candles in bronze sconces, and haply, for another franc a-day, a cornice of

* See Times leader, November 2nd, 1855.

artificial flowers round the ceiling, and your bed-curtains tied with silken cords in a true-lover's knot. All this you have. Countless little dark corridors—now soup-smelling, now sewer-smelling, but always narrow, and with highly polished floors—lead to these chambers of delight; and what a gratification it must be to think that you can retain one of these paradises at so low a rate as three francs a day—that you are living in a first-class hotel, and that on the first floor there may be residing the King of Candy (incog. as Count Sucre d'Orge), or the reigning Duke of Saxe Schinkelstein-Phizelwitz in saloons with malachite doors and velvet hangings, and who have dinners of five-and-twenty covers served every day?

This is the great Parisian Hotel with its *salle-à-manger* as large as the Guildhall of many an English corporate town, and in decoration a repetition, on a grand scale, of the painting, gilding, and polishing of the saloons above-stairs. This is the Hall of the *Table d'hôte*, where confiding travellers pay blithely their six francs, under the impression that they are partaking of a real French dinner, and of the *ne plus ultra* category. This is the field of the cloth of damask; and, from its extremities, issue the luxurious *Tabagie*, or smoking-room, with its marble café tables, and its emollient, elastic, velvet-draped divans; also the salon, or drawing-room, for the ladies, where you are to find the *vrai* comfort *Anglais*, a floor nearly entirely carpeted, a fire-place with a real English grate, a real poker, tongs, and shovel, and an almost total absence of the two pervading household smells of Gaul,—soup and cigar-smoke. They say the *Tuileries* is redolent of both odours; I know the *Luxembourg* is, though that is but a palace turned into a picture-gallery; so, who is to complain of the Great Hotel of the Chinese Ambassadors, if the perfume of the worst-grown and worst-manufactured tobacco in Europe, and of the fragrant but powerful *pot au feu* cling to it like the scent of the roses to the vase that is broken and ruined?

This is the Parisian hotel with its great vestibule or entrance-hall leading to the grand double staircase (more bees'-waxed than ever, if perchance its steps be not of *Sienna* marble), and its balustrades of bronze scroll-work gilt, and its stair-rail covered with velvet. The vestibule is crowded with faultlessly attired waiters, talkative couriers, pompous English flunkies; with, now and then, a flying figure in a white nightcap and apron from the culinary regions, or a female domestic employed in some back-stairs capacity (for she waits upon no guest) voluble in talk, heavy gold-eared, and scarlet kerchiefed, head encircled, as it is the wont of the French domestic woman-kind to be. There yet wants the bureau—a glass-case with rosewood panelings, hung with an armoury of keys, and pigeon-holes with numbers over, and wax candles in brass

candlesticks within them: the bureau where sit the ribboned lady with her relatives, whom you have heard of, passing the livelong day in one slow, grinding round of *Rabelaisian* quarter-hours, and drawing out those frightful little accounts, which, when the feast is over, make men laugh no more. There needs also the double range of bells; some of which are always ringing, and are watched by a fat man in a blue apron, the indoor porter, who lazily nods his head to each oscillating *tinnabulum*; and when the number twenty-two has rung himself into a frenzy of rage and impatience, calmly calls out to some placid waiter, who is collectedly cracking nuts in the sunshine, that he thinks the *Numero soixante-douze* is on the point of ringing his bell.

Little more is required to complete the hotel tableau. Throw in a noble semi-circular flight of steps leading to the door; with one or two Englishmen, either railway-rugged and vulgar, or shooting-jacketed and solemnly aristocratic; the spacious courtyard, with more gossiping servants and cooks; a row of neat, brougham-looking vehicles or *voitures bourgeoises*, with the drivers all placidly asleep on their boxes; an *Auvergnat* water-carrier; a big dog; a little boy in a go-cart; with a black silk pudding round his head; a knot of noisy, garlic-smelling, worthless interpreters and valets de place pretending to a knowledge of all languages, and conversant with none. Then the outer *conciergerie* or porter's lodge, smelling more of soup and smoke than the whole house put together, and giving forth sounds of a jingling piano and the hammering of pegs into boot-heels, and this is, I think, positively all—Stay, painter! as a final dash of your pencil, depict me, hovering about—unobtrusively, but most observantly—a non-moustachioed man, spare in stature, mildewed in garb, forbidding in demeanour; who is not anything particular, and does not want to be thought anything particular, but who, for all that, knows where the *Rue de Jerusalem* is, who the prefect of police for the time being is, where the commissary of police for the quarter has his bureau, and what is the daily pay of a mouchard, or gentleman attached to the spy department of police, in a purely friendly manner; who watches patiently over the movements of the guests at the great *caravanserais*; dispensing his silent courtesies in a most Catholic and impartial manner; now playing the spy on an ambassador, and now prying into the affairs of a commercial traveller from *Marseilles*.

There is, I take it, in the great French hotel, as in the great French palace, and in the great French nation itself, a wonderful mixture of the admirably great and the absurdly mean. From the sublime to the ridiculous there is but one step, we know; but, in that excellent, generous, inconsistent land, the sublime and the

ridiculous go arm in arm. Here, in England, we are either gloomily grand, sublimely stupid, or else squalidly, wretchedly, nakedly low, paltry, and contemptible. There is not one flaw in the aristocratic orthodoxy of Belgrave Square; but there is not one sound inch in the rags of Church Lane, St. Giles's. With us it is either Mivart's or the Clarendon, and the Blue Pump or the Cadgers' Arms. But in France, the high and the low, the gorgeous and the ragged, the blouse and the embroidered coat, the palace and the hovel, the bees'-waxed oak and the bare red tiles, are all mixed in a marvellous and incongruous salad. Give me the grandest hotel, the staliest mansion, that Paris can boast of, and I will find you, within eyeshot of the gilt and frescoed saloons, holes and corners such as we would not lodge an English hound in. Among appliances of the most exquisitely advanced civilisation, peeps out a want of common cleanliness, of common household A B C. To the waiter, accomplished as a marquis, succeeds a man to make your fire and bed, who is not only a boor, but has a considerable spice of the savage in him. The carved and bronzed locks drop off for sheer rottenness; the mother-of-pearl handled knives won't cut; the gilded and paneled doors won't shut; the whole reminds me of a stately volume magnificently bound and embossed, and printed on superfine paper; but full of the grossest typographical errors.

This is the great Parisian, and, with very trifling variations in Italy and Germany, the great continental hotel; which we are to take for a model and cynosure in our reform, or rather revolution, of our own cumbrous, uncomfortable, expensive, extortionate English hotels. But I am not retained on either side as yet. I am neither Rowland, Sergeant, nor Oliver, Q.C. My task is to portray, not to argue.

There is the second-class Paris Hotel, scarcely inferior in size to the home of the Chinese ambassadors; but minus the gilding, bees'-waxing, and artistic decorations. The deficiency is amply made up, it must be admitted, by an additional hundred and fifty per centum of villanous odours, horrible uncleanness, and ignorance of the rudiments of comfort. The second-class Paris hotel is the first-class provincial one; and I say advisedly, and with all the responsibilities of brevier and long primer on my head, that in such hotels, in Paris, Marseilles, Rouen, Bordeaux, Lyons, Amiens, there are landlords whose notions of soap, water, mops, and flannels, are not much above those of a half-caste Indian—the dirtiest specimen of humanity I can call to mind; whose dinners are villanously cooked and filthily served, and whose charges are so exorbitant that the traveller of imaginative temperament might, by a trifling exercise of fancy, assume himself to be in a cave of robbers such as the Seigneur de Santillane has described and Salvator Rosa has painted.

The Students' Hotel in Paris is simply a den. Here, red tiles for flooring revel; here, a toothbrush would be looked at with about the same ignorant curiosity as the pocket-mirror of Pharaoh's daughter. Dirt—genuine, unadulterate, uninfluenced-by-English-alliance dirt reigns supreme. Ask any medical student who has varied his studies at Guy's or Bartholomew's by an anatomical excursion to the Clamart. Ask him which he prefers; Lant Street, Lower East Smithfield, Chiswell Street, Nassau and Charles Streets, or the Rue St. Jacques de la Harpe, de l'École de Médecine, and the Place de l'Odéon?

Boulogne, Calais, Havre, Dieppe, Cherbourg, being watering-places much in vogue with pleasure-seekers and invalids both French and English, have another species of hotels. They are large roomy, airy, cheerful, elegant; and, with some exceptions—foremost among them, the excellent Hôtel des Bains at Boulogne—intensely uncomfortable. Comfort, to be sure, is not much wanted under a broiling July sun in the height of the bathing season; but I can conceive no more lamentable picture than that of a chilly English traveller shivering in one of the dear big bedrooms of an Hôtel de la Couronne; a room pierced with doors everywhere save where it is pierced by windows; the walls papered in a pattern resembling one of Mr. Albert Smith's own Mont Blanc placards—all icicles and snow-drops; the waves howling outside like an ogre for the blood of those that go down to the sea in ships; the searching wind peering into every nook, and cranny, and crevice, like a custom-house officer, or a raven, or an ape.

Of the purely English hotel abroad, the less said, I think, the better. The worst features of the continental system are grafted upon the worst features of the English; the cheapest foreign things are charged for at the dearest home rates; and the result is, the enriching of the knave, and the despair of the dupe. You have, to be sure, the consolation of being swindled in your own language by your own countrymen, and of being bitten into frenzy by vermin that may, haply, have crossed the Channel in British blankets. You have also an opportunity of witnessing how kindly the rascality of dear old England will flourish on a foreign soil; how a dirty, inattentive, clumsy, uncivil English waiter will put forth stronger blossoms of those desirable qualities abroad; and you are initiated into quite a new phase of the mysteries of foreign exchanges by learning that an English sovereign is worth about fifteen francs French money, and an English shilling somewhere bordering on ninepence halfpenny.

I have been thus prolix, and perhaps prosy, on the theme of French hotels, because in their chiefest features they are identical with the hotels of the other parts of Europe. But this survey is cosmopolitan, and must not be confined to one country.

What has the land of Alp and glacier, *châlet* and *chamois*, flat watches and *Ranz des Vaches*, done, that it is not to have its hotels mentioned? They are, I take it, in many respects superior to, in many wofully beneath, their French neighbours. Spacious, well-aired, and cheerful they are certainly; often elegant; always possessing, and vauntingly too, a certain outward and visible cleanliness that is not always, alas! borne out inwardly. The *table-d'hôtes* are crowded, are conversational, spruce, modish, and excellent in quality; but to me they are *Barmecide* feasts. The truth is, that, with the exception of Germany, where the bill of fare gives me an indigestion, I never could get enough to eat abroad. I am not a glutton. Perhaps I am nervous, and don't like to ask for things. I have paid high prices, and sat at boards of almost innumerable courses; yet I never could obtain a thoroughly satisfying meal. There are *épergues* full of sham flowers; there are waxen fruits on pseudo-*Sèvres* dishes (I saw a stopped clock on a *table-d'hôte* once); there is a grave waiter in evening costume for the soup; there are men in livery to take away your plate.

Most people are acquainted with the theory about Switzerland. It is held by scientifically travelled men, that the thirteen cantons are, in winter-time, tracts of country as flat as Holland, and as bare as a Siberian steppe. The inhabitants burrow under the ground like moles; and they pass their time in practising their factitious *Ranz des Vaches*, learning to pretend that they are expiring of homesickness, and making musical snuffboxes and flat watches. They are visited occasionally by their friend and patron, Mr. Albert Smith, who teaches them how to make toys in carved wood, and brings them prints of sham Swiss costumes from Paris, against the summer masquerading time. When the tourist season is about to commence, Mr. Beverly and Mr. Danson, from the Surrey Zoological Gardens, send over a staff of scene-painters and carpenters; and, the Switzerland of travellers, of dioramas, and of landscape annuals, is built up. The toy *châlets* are put together like huts for the Crimea, or houses for Australia; valleys are excavated by Messrs. Fox and Henderson; the mountains are "flats," the rocks "set pieces," the cataracts canvas on rollers. Mr. Murray's Guidebook-maker is in the secret, and writes the bill of the performance; and Mr. Gunter does *Mont Blanc* by contract. As for the guides and *chamois*-hunters, after the Italian opera season is over, and no more "supers" are wanted for *Guillaume Tell*, or the *Donna del Lago*, their services are very easily secured at two francs a-day and their travelling expenses. Mr. Nathan the Fancy-Ball Costumier finds the wardrobe; a good stock of the villainous Swiss coinage—*batzen* and *rappen*—is obtained from the marine store shops about *Drury Lane*; and the proprietor of

Wombwell's menagerie kindly lends a few real *chamois* and dogs with *göfres*. There is a grand dress rehearsal of "Switzerland as it isn't" just before the prorogation of *Parliament*; and then the thirteen cantons are ready for the avalanche of lords, invalids, Cambridge tutors, Oxford undergraduates, French countesses, German barons, travelling physicians, landscape-painters, fashionable clergymen, old maids, and cosmopolitan swindlers.

But, as this grand Spectacle costs a great deal of money, the wary Swiss set about recovering their outlay by erecting gigantic hotels: for this they have illimitable *table-d'hôtes*: for this they issue advertisements in execrable English to entrap unwary voyagers: for this they retain bands of touters—not the ragged wretches who besiege you at the custom-house doors in seaport towns, who fight like wolf-cubs for your luggage, and yell hoarsely, "*Hôtel d'Angleterre!*" "*Hôtel des Princes!*" "*Ver good Inglis Otel, Sare!*"—but civil, well-dressed, well-bred villains, male and female, who travel with you by rail and steamboats, who meet you in reading-rooms and on mountain summits, who are baronesses, artists, widowers, citizens of the world, *veuves de la grande armée*, single married ladies who have lost all they possess in the service of "*la branche aînée*," and sigh for the return of the heaven-born *Henry Cinq*. They know all the sights, all the legends and traditions, all the best wines; and they (confidentially, mind you) advise you, if you want really good accommodation at a most reasonable tariff, to put up—"descend" is the word—at the "*Belvedere*," or the "*Trois Couronnes*," or the "*Goldener Drachen*," at such-and-such a place. Curiously, they always happen to have a card of the particular hotel about them. Accidentally, of course.

The Swiss have been renowned for ages as adepts in the art of war. But the *Helvetian Gasthof* keepers know, or at least practise, only one military manoeuvre; that is—charging. They charge like *Chester*; they are "on" to you like *Stanley*. They would pick the bones of *Marmion* as clean as dice. Charge! the Guard at *Waterloo*, the Irish at *Fontenoy*, the Dutch troopers at *Aughrim*, the six hundred at *Balaklava*,—none of these charges could approach the exterminating onslaught of the terrible Swiss landlord-landsknechts. You are too glad to escape with your minor baggage, and leave your military chest behind you. You look at the bill, in after days, as you would at a gazette after a battle, gorged with the list of killed, wounded, and missing *£ s. d.* Few men have the courage to read a Swiss hotel bill straight through, or even to look at it in its entirety. The best way to take it, is by instalments; folding it into slips like a large newspaper in a railway carriage. Read a few items, then take breath. Read again, and grumble. Read again, and swear. Then, make a sudden "dive at the sum total, as at a hot chestnut from a fire bar. Reel, turn

pale, shut your eyes, clench your teeth. Pay, and go thy ways; but to the Belvedere no more.

METEORS.

On the evening of the seventh of December last, at about a quarter before five o'clock, while the sky was cloudless, and when twilight had commenced, a beautiful ball of fire, with a vivid tail of streaming vapour was seen to descend and to give out occasionally dazzling showers of sparks. When the head had disappeared, the tail, which had the aspect of an illuminated cloud, gradually twisted into the form of Hogarth's line of beauty, and thus continued in sight for twenty minutes. In this country, the fire-ball seemed to vanish out of sight when near the horizon; but, at Havre, persons are said to have heard a loud explosion as it neared the earth. It was seen far and wide; it was a striking object at Rouen; and Mr. Webster, of Neath, in South Wales, says it was the same there. Mr. R. J. Mann writes from Ventnor, in the Isle of Wight, that it burst upon him like a flash of lightning; and a spectator at Great Grimsby, in Lincolnshire, declares that little boys there mistook it for the moon falling down. No doubt it was seen at more distant places than these, and must have been very high above the ground when first visible. It would appear, from a comparison of all observations, to have fallen far out at sea. One of its biographers has estimated that it exploded at least fifty miles high in the air; and he has frightened the susceptible by assuring us that its weight was above five million tons.

In periods and places lacking the light of knowledge, much alarm has been created by these sudden appearances. One meteor, which fell with a great noise at the village of Doorallah in the Sikh country not long since, was immediately conveyed with much respect to the village, and a subscription forthwith commenced to build a temple over it; the devout considering it not inferior to a fresh incarnation of deity. The rajah, however, eyed it politically; and, fearing that it meant evil to his dynasty, gladly listened to the request of a British officer, who begged it of his highness; who ordered it to be escorted by a guard of honour of Brahmins and Sikh horse, but with express orders that it should not be brought near the place of his residence. Another meteor which burst over a town in Malacca, so affected a Chinaman who was ill at the time, that he fell down in a fit and expired. In our straightforward times, we shall not be inclined to look upon such phenomena as other than freaks of nature; and few will be prepared to join the old lady who said, on hearing about the meteor of December, that, if we marked her, we should hear of something serious about the war. Something serious *has* been heard; and the

elderly prophetess will no doubt be tempted to say she "told us so," since we have heard what it is to be sincerely hoped is something seriously good.

Many of these extraordinary bodies have been recorded, especially within the last few years; but more have probably found their way to earth unseen. History speaks of a lump of meteoric iron which descended into the river at Narni, in the Papal States, in the year nine hundred and thirty-one, before our era, as so large that it stood four feet above the level of the water. Another at Ægos Potamos was said to have been equal in size to two large millstones. Modern times have not seen such big things, though not less interesting. In Normandy, at midday, fifty years ago, it rained hot stones over a surface of twenty square miles; and some of the stones weighed twenty pounds. A little more than two years ago a magnificent meteor shone out over the north of England. It was, to look at, equal in size to the sun, and was pronounced to be a comet. It fell towards the east, bursting with a noise like thunder, scattering portions of its substance over Hanover. All the fragments of these *aérolites* are found to possess nearly a similar constitution—half, or more, metallic (that mostly iron or nickel), and the rest earthy. The stony constituents predominate rarely; which leads to the unquestionable inference, that such masses as that found in a plain north-west of Buenos Ayres, supposed to weigh thirteen tons, and surrounded by nothing which would explain its presence or claim its affinity; another discovered by a Russian traveller on a mountain of slate in Siberia, fourteen hundred pounds in weight; and many others in equally unaccountable positions, were once fiery meteors, finishing their wandering existence by a rapid plunge into our earth.

What are they before we see them, and where do they come from? Some—and learned men, too—have supposed them to come from volcanoes in the moon; others have suggested that these solid bodies are formed in the air, manufactured out of gas; but the lapse of time and the learning of valuable experience has pointed out a source quite satisfactory; and, has lifted the curtain before a panorama of a most wonderful character.

Who has not felt an interest in watching, on a clear night, the irregular flittings of those pretty stars which appear to be in search of a suitable lodgment in the sky? Some are faint, and their journey is short; others take long sweeps and are bright, while a few become brilliant as the planet Venus, and sometimes leave streaks of cloudy light behind them. Abundant evidence has proved that these shooting stars,

Gilding the night

With sweeping glories and long trains of light, are none other than small bodies or lumps of

stony substance ; which, in floating about in vast space, happen to graze or fly through the earth's thin atmosphere, and become shining hot by reason of the resistance it offers to their violent motion. This effect is nothing extraordinary, as it is well known that tinder may be ignited in a small tube, the air in which is suddenly compressed by means of a plunger ; indeed, so much heat may be raised in this way, that, if a thirty-two pound shot could be driven through the air at the rate of ten miles per second—or one-third only of the travelling rate of most shooting stars—it would quickly attain a temperature of one million degrees, or three hundred times the heat of boiling iron. There can be no difficulty, then, in believing that the body of a shooting star must become intensely heated simply by its friction with the atmosphere when rushing through at the rate of fifty-four thousand miles an hour.

The air itself is luminous when sufficiently compressed, and this fact may account for the faintly visible wake left by those meteors which penetrate into its lower and denser layers. A very remarkable star of this latter class appeared over the Shetland Isles not many years ago, with a splendour greater than that of the full moon, and pursued its rapid way in full view as far as the overhead of Rome, when it split into three parts, each followed by a tail. It was reckoned to pass fifty miles above the ground, and to fly some thirty miles in a second of time.

Lastly, if the course of these shooting stars happens to be more or less direct towards the surface of the earth, they cannot escape being drawn to it by the great law which keeps up the harmonious movements of the world ; and, when they thus visit us, they reveal to us their substance. Although this is always solid, few accidents of a serious nature have attended the descent of *aérolites* : in nearly three hundred recorded instances, only four persons are known to have been killed. A few years ago one was observed to burst nearly over the town of Hauptstadt, in Bohemia, and one portion dashed through the roof of a house in which two little children were asleep, within a few feet of their bed, but did no worse than frighten them. When dug out, the stone proved to be as large as an ordinary cannon-shot.

There is now no doubt of these *meteorites* being shooting stars ; but the question has not been settled, What are shooting stars ? On the contrary, the more we inquire, the more the marvel increases ; the tale becomes intricate, and we are fairly launched into a world of inquiry boundless and trackless. What shall we say to those flying masses of matter which we call shooting stars ? Science tells us unerringly, if they are independent of the

earth they must be little planets themselves, performing a regular progress round the sun as we do, and invisible to us except when they venture near our atmosphere. Now, it is known that, although we are seeing shooting stars at all times of the year, yet there are periods—on the tenth of August and the thirteenth of November—when they are abundant ; and, at the former date especially, regular in their appearance. Watchers at Paris and other places on this night have counted, during one hour, as many as one hundred and eighty-four such appearances ; so many were seen in America on the fourteenth of November, eighteen hundred and thirty-three, as to strike many persons with terror—people ran to their doors affrighted, crying that the world was on fire. The display must have been very grand ; the shower of fire was bright enough to make small objects visible, and some of the meteors assumed the brilliancy of fire-balls. Professor Plinsted says that this shower was witnessed from the North American lakes to the West Indies, and from Central Mexico to the Bermudas, and that its height above the earth was two thousand two hundred and thirty-eight miles. In India, likewise, a similarly gorgeous display was witnessed four years ago.

From many such observations, there is a well-grounded belief among those who have studied the subject, that, on the tenth of August and thirteenth of November we pass through an innumerable crowd or ring of these strange bodies ; all, like our globe, obeying the same central authority, and travelling on in a circle about as large as that of our earth, but crossing it at that part which corresponds to the above date. Were it not for those beneficent laws by which all things are kept in bounds, there seems to be no reason why, at these times of the year, we should not be enveloped in such an awful shower of meteoric stones as to make woe to the inhabitants of the earth. Guesses worthy of belief have been offered, that our planet is nearly at the edge of at least one vast disc of these meteors ; that they increase in numbers towards the sun or centre of the disc, and that the reflected light from the collective myriads, like notes in the sunbeam, causes the curious light sometimes seen immediately before or after sunset at spring-tide, stretching up from the direction of the sun high into the heavens in the shape of a cone or sugar-loaf. If such ideas are true, we must feel thankful that we are not dwellers in Venus and Mercury, which must of course be in the very thick of the trouble.

Will the reader ask us still—what are shooting stars ? We cannot tell ; we see they are made up of substances found at our feet ; but, as to how it comes to pass that innumerable hordes of shapeless stony masses—small and great—hurry pell-mell round the sun, engrossing a region nearly four hundred of

million of miles across, no man has yet ventured an opinion which is able to satisfy the judgment of mankind.

TWO COLLEGE FRIENDS.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER III.

WINNINGTON'S visits to the manor grew more constant as the day of his departure drew near. Early in the morning he passed through the village, and entered the dilapidated house, and only issued from it again, accompanied by Ellen, to pursue their botanical pursuits upon the hills. Had he ever told her of any other pursuit in which he was engaged? Had he gone in a formal manner, as recommended in the True Lover's Guide, to the father, and demanded his permission to pay his addresses to his daughter? Had he displayed to that careful gentleman the state of his affairs, and agreed on the sum to be settled during the marriage upon Ellen as pin-money, and as jointure in case of his death? No; he had never mentioned the state of his heart to Ellen, or of his affairs to Mr. Warleigh. He had spoken, to be sure, a good deal about the future; his plans when he had taken his degree; the very street he should live in when he entered into practice, and somehow all these projects had reference to some one else. He never seemed to limit the view to himself; but in all his counsellings about the years to come, he was like the editor of a newspaper, or the writer of a ponderous history, and used the dignified "we;" We shall have such a pretty little drawing-room, with a great many roses on the paper, a splendid mirror over the mantel-piece, and a piano, such a piano! against the wall. Who was included in the We? Ah! that was a secret between him and Ellen; and I am not going to play the spy, and then let all the world know what I have discovered. It seemed as if the father was included too; for there was a charming little room laid aside for a third individual, with a nice low fender and a nice warm fire, and a nice pipe laid all ready for him after dinner, and some delicious tobacco procured from a patient of Winnington, a distinguished merchant in the Turkey trade, and kept in a beautiful bag of blue silk, which Ellen had sewed up with her own hands, with gold tassels, astonishing to behold.

"And we must have a spare bed-room," he said; "it needn't be very large for my sister—she's not very tall yet, and a little crib would do."

"But Dulcibel will grow," said Ellen; "she's now seven, and by the time she requires the room, she will be—who can tell how old she will be then, Winnington?"

"I can. She will be ten at most."

"I think," said Mr. Warleigh, "you had better bring her here: we can get Joe Walters to patch up another room; and, with a prop or two under the floor, even the ball-room might be safe to occupy."

"O! no, father: the floor is entirely fallen in; and, besides, the ceiling is just coming down."

"And London is such a noble field for exertion," said Winnington; "and if I have a chance, I will so work and toil, and write and make myself known, that I shall be disappointed if I am not a baronet in ten years—Sir Winnington Harvey, Bart."

"A very modern title," said Mr. Warleigh, "which I hope no one I care for will ever condescend to accept. My ancestors had been knights of Combe-Warleigh for six hundred years before baronetries were heard of; besides, as those pinchbeck baronies are only given to millionnaires, where are you to get a fortune sufficient to support the dignity?"

A sudden flush came to Winnington's face. "I should like to owe everything to you, sir; and, perhaps—perhaps, there will be enough for any rank the king can give."

"It strikes me," said Mr. Warleigh, with a laugh, "you are a great deal more hopeful even than I was at your time of life. Ah! I remember what day-dreams we had, Ellen's mother and I—how we expected to restore the old name, and build up the old house—"

"I'll do both, sir!" cried Winnington, standing up. "I feel sure there is a way of doing so; I have thought much over this for a week past, and before I go I'll prove to you—"

"What? Has a ghost come from the grave to point out some hidden treasure?"

Winnington was still standing up in the excitement of the new idea which filled his heart. He was just going to reply, when a sudden crash alarmed them. Ellen screamed, and fled to Winnington for safety. The sound shook the whole house. At first they thought some of the outer wall had tumbled down. A cloud of dust soon filled the room, and nearly blinded them.

"It is the ball-room ceiling," said Mr. Warleigh, as if struck with the omen. "The house is ruined beyond repair, and sometime or other will bury us all in its fall. Young man, I advise you to get out of its way; for it will crush whatever stands near it."

The interruption gave Winnington time to think, and he resolved not to make Mr. Warleigh the confidant of his hopes. That night he took his leave. It was the last night of his residence in the rectory, but he was to return next short vacation. The parting was long, and it was late when he got home. Arthur was busy writing. He had given up his geology for the last week, and seldom moved out of the house; he looked up as Winnington came in, but said nothing in welcome.

"I'm glad to find you up," said Winnington, "for I want to talk to you, Arthur, and take your advice, if you are not busy."

Arthur laid aside the pen, and covered the sheet he was writing with blotting-paper.

"About Ellen, I suppose?" he said; "love in a cottage, and no money to pay the butcher. Go on!"

"It is about Ellen," said Winnington; "it is about love—a cottage also, probably—but not about poverty, but wealth, rank, magnificence!"

"Ha! let us hear. You speak with sense at last—you'll give up this penniless fancy—you'll hate her in a month when you find yourself tied to penury and obscurity."

"But I shan't be tied to penury and obscurity; I tell you she is the greatest heiress in England, and it is I who will put her in possession of her wealth. It is this right hand which will lift up the veil that keeps her treasures concealed! It is I who will hang pearls about the neck that would buy a kingdom, and plant the diamonds of India among her hair—and all from her own soil!"

It is impossible to describe the effect of this speech upon the listener. He sat upright upon his chair; his lips partly open, his face as pale as ashes, and his eye fixed on the enthusiastic boy.

"And you! you, dear Arthur, you shall help me in this—for your German residence gave you a knowledge of the appearances of a mineral bed—you have studied the subject here, for I have watched your experiments. I know this estate is filled with ore; but how to work it, Arthur—how to begin—how to smelt—to clear—to cast! these are the things you must help me in; Ellen will be grateful, and so shall I."

"Shall you? You be grateful for what?"

"For your aid in bringing into practical effect the discovery I have made of the vast mineral resources with which all Combe-Warleigh is filled. You'll help us, Arthur—for Lucy's sake! for my sake! for all our sakes! won't you?"

"How have you made this discovery?" said Arthur in a calm voice.

"Do you remember the night you burned the broom-plant? I thought nothing of it at the time, but in the morning when I came down, the old woman was clearing out the grate. I stopt her, and grubbed about among the ashes; and see what I found! a piece of solid metal, perfectly free from earth! See, here it is! How lucky I was to make the discovery! It will make Mr. Warleigh richer than if his lands were filled with gold."

The face of Arthur grew almost black.

"I was of age," he said, "four days ago, and made an offer to Mr. Warleigh's agent for the manorial rights and heath-lands of his estate—which he is bound to accept, for I give the sum they ask."

"Arthur!" exclaimed Winnington starting up; "have you the heart to ruin the right owners of the soil?"

"By this time they have sold it; they are deep in debt."

"But they shall not! No; this very

moment I will go back to the manor and tell Mr. Warleigh what I know; he will not fulfil the bargain made by his attorney."

"O! no, you won't," said Arthur, knitting his brows; "I have toiled and struggled for many years for this, and you think I will now submit to beggary and disgrace, to see the wealth I have worked for, formed into shape, called out of nothing into glittering existence, heaped upon another, and that other a dotard whose fathers for a thousand years have been treading on countless riches, and never heard the sound—the sound that reached my ears the moment I trod the soil. It shall not be."

Winnington looked at the wild eye of his companion. A suspicion again came into his mind of the state of Arthur's brain. He tried to soothe him.

"But perhaps, after all," he said, "we may be both mistaken. It is very likely the friendliest thing I could do to hinder you from buying these unprofitable acres. If your expectations are deceived, you will be utterly ruined, and what will you do?"

"A man can always die," replied Arthur, sitting down; "and better that than live in poverty."

"And Lucy?—"

"For ever Lucy! I tell you, Winnington, that when you look at me you grow so like her, that I almost hate the girl as if the blow you strike me with just now, were struck by her."

"I strike no blow. I merely say that Lucy would give you the same advice I do. She would not wish to grow rich by the concealment of a treasure, and the impoverishment of the rightful owner."

"The rightful owner is the man to whom the treasure belongs," said Arthur, not bursting forth into a fresh explosion as Winnington expected, the moment his speech was uttered. "And [if the bargain is concluded, the lands are mine."

"Not all?"

"No. I leave them the rich fields, the pasture ground in the valley, the farm upon the slope. I am modest, and content myself with the [useless waste; the dreary moor, the desert hill. It is, in fact, making Mr. Warleigh a free gift of fifteen hundred pounds, and with that he can give his daughter a portion, and rebuild his old ruin, with a wing in it for his son-in-law; and the remaining five hundred of my stately fortune (that wretches should be found so low as to exist on two thousand pounds!) will erect a crushing-mill, and dig to the first lode. Then—then," he continued, as the picture rose to his imagination, "the land will grow alive with labour. There will be a town where the present hamlet shivers in solitude upon the wild. There will be the music of a thousand wheels, all disengaging millions from the earth. There will be a mansion such as kings might live in, and I—and I—"

"And Lucy?" again interposed Winnington.

"Ay! and Lucy—when I have raised the annual income to ten thousand pounds—I could not occupy the house with less."

Winnington looked upon his friend with pity. He sat down and was silent for some time. There was no use in continuing the conversation. "You seem to forget," he said at last, "that I go to-morrow to Oxford."

"So soon?" said Arthur, with a scrutinising look. "You didn't intend to go till Saturday."

"I shall have a few days longer with my family. I want to see Dulcibel, who is home from school; and besides," he added with some embarrassment, "I don't find our residence here so pleasant as it used to be. There was a time," he said, after a pause, "when it would have broken my heart to leave you; but now—"

There was a tremble in his voice, and he stopped.

"And why?" said Arthur. "Whose fault is it that there is a change?"

"Ah! mine, I dare say. I don't blame any one," replied Winnington, checked in the flow of feeling by the coldness of Arthur's voice. "You will have your letter for Lucy ready. I shall start before you are up; so you had better let me have it to-night."

"There is plenty of time. I don't go to bed till late. I will walk ten or twelve miles with you on your way to the post waggon. The exercise will do me good."

"I start very early; for the waggon leaves for Exeter at ten in the morning. I have sent on my trunk by the shoemaker's cart. I have taken leave of—of people who have been kind to me, and shall walk merrily across the moor. It is only fifteen miles."

"I shall see you as far as the Hawsleigh Brook," said Arthur; "that is, if you don't object to the company of a friend. And why should we quarrel?"

Winnington took the offered hand. "I knew your heart could not be really so changed," he said, "as you tried to make it appear. You are ill, Arthur," your brain is too much excited. I will not let you get up so early, or take such exercise. It will put you into a fever. Let me feel your pulse, and you can owe me my first fee."

The pulse was galloping; the cheek alternately flushed and paled.

"This is beyond my present skill," said Winnington, shaking his head. "You must apply to the nearest doctor for advice."

"You are very kind, my dear Winnington, as you always are; but I don't think medicine will be of much avail."

"But you will see the doctor?"

"Whatever you like," replied Arthur, now quite submissive to his friend's directions.

"And you will write to Lucy, quietly, soberly. She'll be alarmed if you give way to your dreams of wealth," said Winnington.

"And Aladdin's Palace and the salary?" replied Arthur, with a smile. "Well, I will be as subdued as I can, and the note shall be ready for you in time."

He took the pen as he spoke, and commenced a letter. Winnington looked at him, but more in sorrow than in anger. There was something in the pertinacious offer of Arthur to accompany him which displeased him. "He watches me," he said, "as if afraid of my whispering a word of what I know to the Warleighs. I shall reach London in time, and carry a specimen of the ore with me." The clock struck one. "You don't seem very quick in writing, Arthur. Perhaps you will leave the letter on the table. I am going to bed."

"No—just five minutes—and tell her, Winnington—tell her that I am unchanged; that riches, rank, position—nothing will alter my affection—"

"And that you will come to see her soon?"

"Yes; when I have been to London."

Winnington started. "And when do you go there?"

"In two days. I will come to Warwickshire on my return—perhaps before you have gone back to Oxford."

"Ah! that will put all right! That will be a renewal of the old time."

"Here's the letter; put it carefully away. I have told her I am unchanged. You must tell her so too."

Winnington shook his head, but said nothing. They joined hands.

"And now," said Winnington, "farewell. I didn't think our parting would be like this. But remember, if we should never meet again, that I never changed; no, not for a moment in my affection to you."

"Why shouldn't we meet again? Do you think me so very ill?" inquired Arthur.

"I don't know. There are thoughts that come upon us, we don't know why. It wasn't of your health I was thinking. But there are many unexpected chances in life. Farewell. You shan't get up in the morning."

They parted for the night. Arthur, instead of going to bed, looked out upon the moor. A wild and desolate scene it was, which seemed to have some attraction for him, for which it was difficult to account. When he had sat an hour—perhaps two hours, for he took no note of time—in perfect stillness, observing the stars, which threw a strange light upon the heath, he thought he heard a creaking on the rickety old stairs, as of some one slipping on tiptoe down. He stood up at his window, which commanded a view of the top of the wooden porch. Stealthily looking round, as if in fear of observation, he saw a man with a lantern cautiously held before him emerge from the house and walk rapidly away. He turned off towards the left. Over his shoulder he carried a pickaxe and a

spade. They shone fitfully in the light. He passed down the declivity towards the waterfall, and then disappeared.

Next morning, at six o'clock, the old woman, on coming to her daily work, found the door on the latch. On the table she saw a note, and took it up-stairs. She knocked at Arthur's door.

"Come in," he said. "Is that you, Winington? I shall get up in a moment."

"No zur, the young gentleman be gone, and I thought this here letter might be of consequence."

Arthur took the letter, and, by the grey light of dawn, read as follows:—

"I am going to leave you, dear Arthur, and feel that I did not part from you so kindly as I wished. I don't like to show my feelings; for in fact I have so little command of them, that I am always afraid you will despise me for my weakness. I will give your messages and your letter to Lucy. I will tell her you are coming soon. Even now the dawn is not far off, and I am going before the hour I told you; for I will not allow you, in your present state of health, to accompany me to Hawsleigh. It is to London I am going. O! pardon me for going. I think it my duty to go. You will think so too, when you reflect. If they are surprised at my absence (for I may be detained), explain to them where I am gone. I should have told you this last night, but did not dare. Dear Arthur, think kindly of me. I always think affectionately of you.—W. H."

"He should have signed his name in full," said Arthur, and laid the letter under his pillow. "To London—to the attorney—with specimens of the ore. I shall get to town before him, in spite of his early rising."

There was a smile upon his face, and he got up in a hurry.

"He can't have been long gone," he said to the old woman; "for the ink he wrote with was not dry."

"I thought I saw him as I came," she replied, "a long way across the heath; but p'raps it was a bush, or maybe a cow. I don't know, but it was very like him."

After breakfast he hurried to the village. The drunken shoemaker was earning a farther title to that designation, and was speechless in bed, with a bandage over his head, which some one had broken the night before. The money Winington had paid him for carting his luggage was answerable for his helpless condition. There was no other horse or vehicle in the place. So, moody and discontented, Arthur returned, put a shirt in each pocket of his coat, and proceeded on foot to Hawsleigh. He arrived there at one o'clock. The post-waggon had started at ten. The shoemaker had carefully instructed the driver to convey Winington's luggage to Exeter; and as he only jogged on at the rate of four miles an hour, and loitered besides on the way, he was not to wait

for his passenger, who would probably walk on a few miles, and take his seat when he was tired.

There was no conveyance in Hawsleigh rapid enough to overtake a vehicle which travelled even at so slow a pace as four miles an hour with the advantage of three hours' start; and once in the coach at Exeter, there was no possibility of contending with such rapidity of locomotion. It would take him to London in little more than five days.

Arthur, however, discovered that a carrier's cart started at three o'clock for the village of Oakfield, twelve miles onward on the Exeter road. He was in such a state of excitement and anxiety to get on, that rest in one place was intolerable; and though he knew that he was not a yard advanced in reality by availing himself of this chance, as after all he would have to wait somewhere or other for the next morning's post-waggon, he paid a small fee for the carriage of a few articles he hastily bought and tied up in a bundle, and set off with the carrier. He seemed to be relieved more and more as he felt nearer to the object of his journey. With knitted brow and prest lips he sat in the clumsy cart or walked alongside. The driver, after some attempts at conversation, gave him up to his own reflections.

"A proud fellow as ever I see," he muttered, "and looks like a lord. Well, he shouldn't travel by a cart if he didn't speak to cart's company."

The cart's company increased as they got on. Women with poultry baskets, returning from the neighbouring hamlets and farms; stray friends of the proprietor of the vehicle who were on their way to Oakfield; and at last little village children, who had come out to meet the cart, and were already fighting as to who should have the privilege of riding the old horse to the water when he was taken out of the shafts; it was a cavalcade of ten or a dozen persons when the spire of the church came into view. Arthur still walked beside them, but took no part in the conversation. There seemed something unusual going on in the main street as they drew near. There was a crowd of anxious-faced peasantry opposite the door of the Woodman's Arms; they were talking in whispers and expecting some one's arrival.

"Have ye seen him coming, Luke Waters?" said two or three at a time to the carrier.

"Noa—who, then?"

"The crowner; he ha' been sent for a hour and more."

"What's happened then? Woa, horse!"

"Summat bad. He's there!" said a man, pointing to the upper window of the inn, and turning paler than before; "he was found in Parson's Meadow—dead—with such a slash!" The man touched his throat, and was silent.

Arthur began to listen. "Who is it? does any one know the corpse?"

"Noa; he were a stranger, stript naked all to the drawers—and murdered; but here's the crowner. He'll explain it all."

The coroner came, a man of business mind, who seemed no more impressed with the solemnity of the scene than a butcher in a shop surrounded by dead sheep. A jury was summoned, and proceeded up-stairs. A few of the by-standers were admitted. Among others Arthur. He was dreadfully calm; evidently by an effort which concealed his agitation. "I have never looked on death," he said, "and this first experience is very terrible."

The inquest went on. Arthur, though in the room, kept his eyes perfectly closed; but through shut lids he conjured up to himself the ghastly sight, the stark body, the gaping wound. He thought of hurrying down-stairs without waiting the result, but there was a fascination in the scene that detained him.

"The corpse was found in this state," said the coroner: "it needs no proof more than the wounds upon it to show that it was by violence the man died. But by whose hands it is impossible to say. Can no one identify the body?"

There was a long pause. Each of the spectators looked on the piteous spectacle, but could give no answer to the question. At last Arthur, by an immense exertion of self-command, opened his eyes and fixed them on the body. He staggered and nearly fell. His cheek became deadly pale. His eyeballs were fixed. "I—I know him!" he cried, and knelt beside his bed. "I parted from him last night: he was to come by the waggon from Hawsleigh on his way to Exeter, but left word that he was going to walk on before. He was my brother—my friend."

"And his name?" said the coroner. "This is very satisfactory."

Arthur looked upon the cold brow of the murdered man, and said, with a sob of despair—

"Winnington Harvey!"

The coroner took the depositions, went through the legal forms, and gave the proper verdict—"Murdered; but by some person or persons unknown."

It was a lawless time, and deeds of violence were very frequent. Some years after the perpetrators of the deed were detected in some other crime, and confessed their guilt. They had robbed and murdered the unoffending traveller, and were scared away by the approach of the post-waggon from Hawsleigh. Arthur caused a small headstone to be raised over his friend's grave, with the inscription of his name and fate. Callous as he sometimes appeared, he could not personally convey the sad news to Winnington's relations, but forwarded them the full certificate of the sad occurrence. It is needless to tell what tears were shed by the unhappy mother and sister, or how often their fancy travelled to the small monument and fresh turf grave in the churchyard of Oakfield.

CHAPTER IV.

WHEN thirty years had elapsed, great changes had taken place in Combe-Warleigh. It was no longer a desolate village, straggling in the midst of an interminable heath, but a populous town,—busy, dirty, and rich. There were many thousands of workmen engaged in mining and smelting. Furnaces were blazing night and day, and there were two or three churches and a town hall. The neighbourhood had grown populous as well as the town; and a person standing on the tower of Sir Arthur Hayning's castle, near the Warleigh waterfall, could see, at great distances, over the level expanse, the juttings of columns of smoke from many tall chimneys which he had erected on other parts of his estate. He had stewards and overseers, an army of carters and waggoners, and regiments of clerks, and sat in the great house; and from his richly-furnished library commanded, ruled, and organised all. Little was known of his early life, for the growth of a town where a man lives is like the lapse of years in other places. New people come, old inhabitants die out, or are lost in the crowd; and very recent events take the enlarged and confused outline of remote traditions. The date of Sir Arthur's settlement at Warleigh was as uncertain to most of the inhabitants as that of the siege of Troy. It was only reported that at some period infinitely distant, he had bought the estate, had lived the life of a miser,—saving, working, heaping up, buying where land was to be had; digging down into the soil, always by some inconceivable faculty hitting upon the richest lodes, till he was owner of incalculable extents of country and sole proprietor of the town and mills of Combe-Warleigh. No one knew if he had ever been married or not. When first the population began to assemble, they saw nothing of him but in the strict execution of their respective duties; he finding capital and employment, and they obedience and industry. No social intercourse existed between him and any of his neighbours: and yet fabulous things were reported of the magnificence of his rooms, the quantity of his plate, the number of his domestic servants. His patriotism had been so great that he had subscribed an immense sum to the Loyalty Loan, and was rewarded by the friendship of the King, and the title that adorned his name. And when fifteen more years of this seclusion and grandeur—this accumulation of wealth and preservation of dignity—had accustomed the public ear to the sound of the millionaire's surname, it was thought a natural result of these surpassing merits that he should be elevated to the peerage. He was now Lord Warleigh, of Combe-Warleigh, and had a coat of arms on the panels of his carriage, which it was supposed his ancestors had worn on their shields at the battle of Hastings. All men of fifty thousand a-year can trace up to the Norman Conquest. Though

their fathers were hedgers and ditchers, and their grandfathers inhabitants of the poor-house, it is always consolatory to their pride to reflect that the family was as old as ever; that extravagance, politics, tyranny, had reduced it to that low condition; and that it was left for them to restore the ancient name to its former glory, and to re-knit in the reign of George or William the line that was ruthlessly broken on Bosworth field. Lord Warleigh it was stated in one of the invaluable records of hereditary descent, (for which subscriptions were respectfully solicited by the distinguished editor, Slaver Lick, Esquire) was lineally descended from one of the peerages which became extinct in the unhappy wars of Stephen and Matilda. It is a remarkable fact, that in a previous edition, when he was only a baronet, with a reputed income of fifteen or twenty thousand pounds, the genealogy had stuck at James the First. But whether his ancestry was so distinguished or not, the fact of his immense wealth and influence was undoubted. He had for some years given up the personal superintendence of his works. Instead of extracting dull ore from the earth, he had sent up dull members to the House of Commons, got dull magistrates put upon the bench, and exercised as much sovereign sway and masterdom over all the district, as if he had been elected dictator with unlimited power. But there is always a compensation in human affairs; and the malevolence natural to all people of proper spirit lying in the shade of so preponderating a magnate, was considerably gratified by what was whispered of the deprent condition of his lordship's spirits. Even the clergyman's wife—who was a perfect model of that exemplary character—looked mysteriously, and said that his lordship never smiled,—that a housemaid who had at one time been engaged in the rectory, had told her extraordinary things about his lordship's habits;—about talks she had heard—the housemaid—late at night, in his lordship's library, when she—the housemaid—was mortally certain there could be no person in the room but his lordship's self; how she—the housemaid—had been told by Thomas the footman, that his lordship, when dining quite alone, frequently spoke as if to some person sitting beside him; when he—Thomas—had sworn to her—the housemaid—that there was no person whatever at table with his lordship, no, not the cat; and then, she—the clergyman's wife—added, as of her own knowledge, that at church his lordship never listened to the sermon; but after apparently thinking deeply of other things, hid himself from her observation, and pretended to fall asleep. How sorry she was to say this, she needn't remark, for if there was a thing she hated it was tittle-tattle, and she never suffered a servant to bring her any of the rumours of the place; it was so unlady-like; and his lordship had been such an excellent friend to

the church—for he had made an exchange of the wretched old glebe, and given a very nice farm for it in the vale of Hawsleigh, and had built a new parsonage-house where the old manor-house stood, and was always most liberal in his donations to all the charities; but it was odd, wasn't it? that he never saw any company—and who could he be speaking to in the library, or at dinner? Dr. Drowes can't make it out: he was never asked to the castle in his life; and tells me he has read of people, for the sake of getting rich, selling their souls to the — Isn't it dreadful to think of? His lordship is very rich, to be sure; but as to selling his soul to —! O! it's a horrid supposition, and I wonder Dr. Drowes can utter so terrible a thought.

But Dr. Drowes had no great opportunity of continuing his awful inuendos, for he was shortly appointed to another living of Lord Warleigh's in the northern part of the county, and was requested to appoint a curate to Warleigh in the prime of life, who would be attentive and useful to the sick and poor. To hear, was to obey—and the head of his College in Oxford, recommended a young man in whom he had the greatest confidence; and Mr. Henry Benford soon made his appearance and occupied the parsonage-house. He was still under thirty years of age, with the finest and most delicately cut features consistent with a style of masculine beauty which was very striking. He was one of the men—delicate and refined in expression, with clear, light complexion and beautiful soft eyes—of whom people say it is a pity he is not a girl. And this feminine kind of look was accompanied in Henry Benford by a certain effeminacy of mind. Modest he was, and what the world calls shy, for he would blush on being presented to a stranger, and scarcely ventured to speak in miscellaneous company; but perfectly conscientious in what he considered the discharge of a duty; active and energetic in his parish, and with a sweetness of disposition which nothing could overthrow. He had a wife and two children at this time, and a pleasant sight it was amid the begrimed and hardened features of the population of Combe-Warleigh to see the fresh faces and clear complexions of the new-comers.

A great change speedily took place in the relations existing between pastor and flock. Schools were instituted—the sick were visited—a weekly report was sent to the Castle, with accurate statements of the requirements of every applicant. Little descriptions were added to the causes of the distress of some of the workmen—excuses made for their behaviour—means pointed out by which the more deserving could be helped, without hurting their self-respect by treating them as objects of charity; and, in a short time, the great man in the Castle knew the position, the habits, the necessities of every one of his neighbours. Nothing pleased him more than the opportunity now afforded him

of being generous, without being imposed on. His gifts were large and unostentatious, and as Benford, without blazoning the donor's merits, let it be known from what source these valuable aids proceeded, a month had not elapsed before kinder feelings arose between the Castle and the town—people smiled and touched their hats more cordially than before, when they met his lordship as he drove through the street; little girls dropped curtsies to him on the side of the road, instead of running away when they saw him coming; and one young maiden was even reported to have offered his lordship a bouquet—not very valuable, as it consisted only of a rose, six daisies and a dandelion—and to have received a pat on the head for it, and half-a-crown. Lord Warleigh had had a cold every Sunday for the last year—and a-half of Dr. Drowes's ministrations; but when Benford had officiated a month or six weeks he suddenly recovered and appeared one Sunday in church. His lordship generally sat in a recess opposite the pulpit, forming a sort of family pew which might almost have been mistaken for a parlour. It was carpeted very comfortably, and had a stove in it, and tables and chairs. In this retirement his lordship performed his devotions in the manner recorded by Mrs. Drowes—and when the eloquent Dr. was more eloquent than usual, he drew a heavy velvet curtain across the front of his room, and must have been lulled into pleasing slumbers by the subdued mumble of the orator's discourse. On this occasion he was observed to look with curiosity towards the new clergyman. All through the prayers he fixed his eyes on Benford's face—never lifting them for a moment—never changing a muscle—never altering his attitude. His hair, now silver white, fell nearly down to his shoulders, his noble features were pale and motionless. Tall, upright, gazing—gazing—the congregation observed his lordship with surprise. When Benford mounted the pulpit—when he was seen in black gown and bands, and his clear rich voice gave out the text, suddenly his lordship's face underwent a strange contortion—he rapidly drew the curtain across the pew and was no more seen. The congregation were sorry that their new clergyman, who had apparently pleased the patron by his reading, was not equally fortunate in the sermon. The preacher, himself, was by no means offended. He knew Lord Warleigh was too clever a man to require any instruction from him, and he went on as usual and preached to the poor. In the vestry, he was laying aside his official costume when the door opened; his cassock was off, his coat was not on, he was in his shirt sleeves, and the great man came in. Benford was overwhelmed with confusion. He had never spoken to a lord before—his face glowed as if on fire. With compressed lips, and his eyes fixed more than ever upon the discom-

fited curate, the old man thanked him for his discourse. "I am Lord Warleigh," he said, "I have received your weekly statements as I desired—they are excellent—come to me for an hour to-morrow. I shall expect you at eleven." Before Mr. Benford had recovered his composure, his lordship had gone.

"He is very kind," said the curate, when he related the occurrence to his wife—"but I don't like him. His hand was like cold iron—I felt as if it had been a sword—and what a nuisance it is he found me in such a dress."

But Mrs. Benford, also, had never seen a lord, and was devoted to the aristocracy. "His lordship is very kind, I am sure, to have asked you to the Castle. None of the doctors have ever been there, nor any of the attorneys."

"That's only a proof," said Benford, a little tickled, it must be owned, with the distinction, "that his lordship is in good health and not litigious; but I shall judge of him better to-morrow."

"He has many livings in his gift," said Mrs. Benford, thoughtfully.

"And is most liberal to the poor," chimed in her husband.

"What a handsome man, he is!" said the lady.

"A fine voice," said the gentleman.

"Truly aristocratic. He is descended from Otho the Stutterer."

"And yet I don't like him. His hand is like a sword." With which repeated observation the colloquy ended, and Benford proceeded to the Sunday School.

How the interview went off on the Monday was never known. Benford was not a man of observation, and took no notice of the peculiar manner of his reception, the long gaze with which Lord Warleigh seemed to study his countenance, and the pauses which occurred in his conversation. He was invited to return on Tuesday; on Wednesday; and when the fourth visit within the week was announced to Mrs. Benford, there was no end of the vista of wealth and dignity she foresaw from the friendship of so powerful a patron.

"And he has asked me to bring the children, too. His lordship says he is very fond of children."

"What a good man he is!" exclaimed the wife. "They'll be so delighted to see the fine things in the house."

"The girl is but three years old and the boy one. I don't think they'll see much difference between his lordship's house and this. I won't take the baby."

"What? Not the baby? the beautiful little angel! Lord Warleigh will never forgive you for keeping him away."

But Benford was positive, and taking his little girl by the hand he walked to the Castle and entered the library. His lordship was not within, and Benford drew a chair

near the table, and opened a book of prints for the amusement of his daughter. While they were thus engaged a side door noiselessly opened, and Lord Warleigh stepped in. He stood still at the threshold, and looked at the group before him. He seemed transfixed with fear. He held out his hand and said, "You—you there, so soon?—at this time of the day? And she!—who is she?"

"My lord," said Benford, "I came at the hour you fixed. This is my little daughter. You asked me to bring her to see you. I hope you are not offended."

"Ah, now, I remember," said his lordship, and held out his hand. "I see visitors so rarely, Mr. Benford—and ladies—" he added, looking with a smile to the terrified little girl who stood between her father's knees and gazed with mute wonder on the old man's face—"ladies so seldom present themselves here, that I was surprised—but now most happy."

He sat down and talked with the greatest kindness. He drew the little girl nearer and nearer to himself; at last he got a volume from the shelf, of the most gorgeously coloured engravings, and took her on his knee. He showed her the beautiful birds represented in the book; told her where they lived, and some of their habits; and pleased with the child's intelligence, and more, with the confidence she felt in his good-nature—he said, "And now, little lady, you shall give me a kiss, and tell me your pretty little name."

The child said, "My name is Dulcibel Benford," and held up her little mouth to give the kiss.

But Lord Warleigh grew suddenly cold and harsh. He put her from his knee in silence; and the child perceiving the change, went tremblingly to her father.

"A strange name to give your child, Mr. Benford," said his lordship.

"I'm very sorry, indeed, my lord," began Mr. Benford, but perceived in the midst of the profoundest respect for the peerage, how absurd it would be to apologise for a Christian name.

"You have a son, I think; what name have you given him?"

"His name is Winnington, my lord—an uncommon."

"What?" cried Lord Warleigh, starting up. You come hither to insult me in my own room. You creep into my house, and worm yourself into my confidence, and then, when you think I am unprepared—for you—"

"As I hope to be saved, my lord—I give you my word, my lord—I never meant to insult you, my lord," said Benford; "but since I have had the misfortune to offend your lordship I will withdraw. Come Lucy Mainfield. She has three names, my lord, Dulcibel Lucy Mainfield. I'm sorry she didn't tell you so before."

"No—don't go," said Lord Warleigh,

sinking into his chair; "it was nothing; it was a sudden pain, which often puts me out of temper. Is the little girl's name Lucy Mainfield? You won't come back to me again, will you, Lucy?"

"O! yes, my lord—Lucy, go to his lordship—he will show you the pictures again." Benford pushed her towards Lord Warleigh. But the girl blushed and trembled, and wouldn't go. She clung to her father's hand.

"Don't force her," said the old man in a mournful tone. "I knew she wouldn't. But you won't go in anger, Lucy? Benford, you'll forgive me?"

"O, my lord," said the curate, immensely gratified, and sat down again.

"Are these family names, Benford?" inquired his lordship carelessly; but still looking sadly in Dulcibel's glowing face.

"Yes, my lord. Dulcibel was my mother's name, and her brother's name Winnington Harvey. You have heard, perhaps, of his melancholy fate? He was murdered."

"You are Winnington Harvey's nephew?" said Lord Warleigh.

"Yes, my lord, and they used to say I was very like him."

"Who?—who used to say so? your mother, perhaps. Is she alive?"

"Both father and mother died when I was three years old. My grandfather in Yorkshire brought me up. It was dear old cousin Lucy, who died when I was twelve—Lucy Mainfield."

"She dead—is she?"

"O, yes, my lord, and left me all the little money she had. She used to say I was very like my uncle."

"And did she tell you any particulars of his end?"

"No, my lord. She spoke very little of the past. She had been very unhappy in her youth—a disappointment in love, we thought; and some people said she had been fond of Uncle Winnington; but I don't know,—his fate was very horrible. He had been down in Devonshire, reading with a friend, and was killed on his way home."

"And you never heard the friend's name?"

"No. Cousin Lucy never mentioned it; and there was no one else who knew."

"And how do you know his fate?"

"It was in the coroner's verdict. And do you know, my lord, he is buried not far from this."

"Who told you that?" said Warleigh, starting up, as if about to break forth in another paroxysm of rage. "Who knows anything about that?"

"Cousin Lucy told me, when I was very young, that if ever I went into the West I should try to find out his grave."

"And for that purpose you are here;—it was to discover this you came to Warleigh?" His lordship's eyes flashed with anger.

"Oh, no, my lord; it is only a coincidence, that's all; but the place is not far off. In fact, I believe it is nearer than cousin Lucy thought."

"Go on—go on," cried Lord Warleigh, restraining himself from the display of his unhappy temper. "What reason have you to think so?"

"The map of the county, my lord. Oakfield does not seem more than twenty miles off."

"And your uncle is buried there?"

"Yes, my lord. I think of going over to see the grave next week."

"I wish you good-morning, Mr. Benford," said Warleigh, suddenly, but very kindly. "You have told me a strange piece of family history. Good morning, too, my little dear. What! you won't shake the old man's hand? You look frightened, Lucy. Will you come and see me again, Lucy Mainfield?" He dwelt upon the name as if it pleased him.

"No,—never," said the little girl, and pushed Benford towards the door. "I don't like you, and will never come again."

Benford broke out into apologies, and a cold perspiration: "She's a naughty, little child, my lord. Dulcibel, how can you behave so? Children, my lord, are so very foolish——"

"That they speak truth even when it is disagreeable; but I expected it, and am not surprised. Good-day."

Soon after this a series of miracles occurred to Mr. Benford, which filled him with surprise. The manager of the bank at Warleigh called on him one day, and in the most respectful manner requested that he would continue to keep his account, as heretofore, with the firm. Now, the account of Mr. Benford was not such as would seem to justify such a request, seeing it consisted at that moment of a balance of eighteen pounds seven and fourpence. However, he bowed with the politeness which a curate always displays to a banker, and expressed his gracious intention of continuing his patronage to Messrs. Bulk & Looby, and the latter gentleman, after another courteous bow, retired, leaving the pass-book in the hands of the gratified clergyman. He opened it; and the first line that met his view was a credit to the Reverend Henry Benford, of the sum of twelve thousand six hundred pounds! On presenting the amazing document to the notice of his wife, that lady at first was indignant at those vulgar tradespeople, Bulk & Looby, venturing to play such a hoax on a friend of Lord Warleigh. This was now the designation by which her husband was most respectable in the eyes of his help-mate; and somewhat inclined to resent the supposed insult, Benford walked down to the bank and came to an explanation with both the partners, in the private room. There could be no doubt of the fact. The money was paid in to his name, in London, and trans-

mitted, in the ordinary course, to his country bankers. In fear and trembling—and merely to put his good luck to the test—he drew a cheque for a hundred and twenty pounds, which was immediately honoured,—and with these tangible witnesses to the truth of his banker's statement, he returned to the parsonage and poured the guineas in glittering array upon the drawing-room table. All attempts to discover the source of his riches were unavailing. Messrs. Bulk & Looby had no knowledge on the subject, and their correspondents in town were equally unable to say.

Then, in a week after this astounding event, a new miracle happened, for Mr. Looby again presented himself at the rectory, and requested to know in whose names the money which had arrived that morning was to be held.

"More money!" said Mr. Benford; "Oh! put it up with the other; but really," added the ingenuous youth, "I don't think I require any more—"

"It isn't for you, sir, this time," said Mr. Looby.

"I'm very glad to hear it," said Mr. Benford, and with perfect truth.

"It's for the children; and if you will have two trustees, the funds will be conveyed to them at once."

Benford named two friends; and, then, quite in a careless, uninterested manner, said, "How much is it?"

"Twenty thousand pounds," replied Mr. Looby, "in the five per cents.—which are now at a hundred and two—say, twenty thousand four hundred pounds, if we sell at once. Our broker is Bocus of Crutched Friars."

Miss Dulcibel was an heiress, and Master Winnington an heir! The funds were to accumulate till they were eighteen and twenty-one respectively, with two hundred a-year for the maintenance and education of each.

Then, in a fortnight more, came a gentleman whom Benford had never seen before—a little, fat, red-faced man, so choked up in a white neckcloth that it was evident he was determined to look like a clergyman or perish in the attempt. He introduced himself in a gracious manner, and said he was a clerical agent.

"More money?" enquired Benford, who now seldom saw any stranger without suspecting that he had just returned from paying large sums to his name at the bank.

"No, sir, not money," replied the agent.

"Oh! that's odd," said Benford; "then, may I ask what your business is with me?"

"It is, perhaps, better than money," replied the little fat man, with a cough which was intended to represent a smile. "Sir Hildo Swilks of Somerset has heard of your great eloquence, Mr. Benford."

"Sir Hildo is very good," said Mr. Benford modestly; "plain common-sense is what I aim at——"

"The truest eloquence," rejoined the

clerical agent; "the rest is nought but 'lather and umbrellas,' as Pope says. He has also heard of your kindness to the poor, your charity, and many other good qualities, and he has done himself the honour to present you to the valuable living of Swilkstone Magna; it is a clear income of eight hundred a-year, with a good parsonage-house, and two packs of hounds within—but, perhaps, you don't hunt, Mr. Benford—ah! very right; it is very unclerical—the bishops ought to interfere. 'Poor is the triumph o'er the timid hare,' as Thomson says, or fox as I say."

"You have proofs, I suppose?" said Benford, thinking it just possible that the plethoric gentleman before him might be an impostor about to end with asking the loan of a pound.

"Here is the presentation, sir, all ready, signed and sealed; you have nothing to do but go to Wells—his lordship will institute you any day you like."

The only other remarkable thing connected with this incident is, that about this time Sir Hildo Swilks paid off a mortgage of eight or nine thousand pounds, as if fortune had smiled on his benevolent action in favour of Mr. Benford.

But, in the meantime, all intercourse between the curate and the noble had ceased. The business of the parish was transacted by letter as before; and it was only when the rector of Swilkstone Magna thought it his duty to announce his approaching departure, that he determined to go up to the castle, and wait on Lord Warleigh in person. Lord Warleigh was ill—he could see nobody—he kept his room; and the confidential gentleman, who drest in plain black, and spoke in whispers, couldn't name any day when his lordship would be likely to admit Mr. Benford.

"Is he very unwell?" said the rector; "for if his lordship will not receive my visit as a neighbour, perhaps he will not object to seeing me in my professional character as a visitor of the sick."

"We dare not tell his lordship he is ill, sir; your presence would alarm him too much; as it is, he is terribly out of spirits, and says curious things—he never was fond of clergymen."

"Mention my request to him if you have the opportunity. I don't wish to go without taking leave."

The man promised, though evidently with no expectation of being able to comply with the request, and Benford returned to communicate to his wife that the animosity of the great man continued.

"And all because poor little Dulcibella said she didn't like him. It was certainly very foolish in her to say so to a lord; but she knows no better."

"He can't bear malice for a mere infant's observations," said Benford. "But I have some strange suspicions about his lordship

which I would not divulge for the world except to you." I fear his lordship drinks." He almost shuddered as he said the horrid word.

"Drinks!—a nobleman!"—exclaimed Mrs. Benford: "impossible!"

"I don't know," replied the rector of Swilkstone. "He looked very odd and talked in a queer way, and fell into passions about nothing. I am not sorry, I assure you, to be going away. I told you from the first I did not like him. His hand felt as cold as a sword."

"I never felt his hand," said Mrs. Benford, in so sad a voice that it was pretty clear she regretted the circumstance very deeply. "But we shall probably be more intimate with that excellent man Sir Hildo. He is only a baronet to be sure, but his title is older than Lord Warleigh's. How good in him to give you the living merely from the good reports he heard of your character."

It was now autumn. The middle of October was past, and an early winter was already beginning to be felt. The preparations for removal were completed, and on the following day the Parsonage was to be deserted, and possession of the new living entered upon. It was nine o'clock: the night was dark and windy; a feeble moon glimmered at intervals through the sky, and added to the gloom she could not disperse. Mrs. Benford retired to her room, as they had to rise early in the morning. Benford was sitting with his feet on the fender, looking into the fire, when he heard a knock at the front door. It was opened by the maid, and soon he perceived steps in the passage; a tap came to the door of the parlour.

"A gentleman to see you, sir," and a figure entered the room. Benford looked round amazed. The stranger stood near the door, and fixed his eyes on Benford's. Wrapt up against the cold, but with the cloak now drooping on his shoulders; with his hat still on his head, and his hand resting on a long staff, stood Lord Warleigh, pale, ghastly, with lips distended, and uttering not a word.

"Your lordship!" exclaimed Benford springing up. "What in heaven's name has brought your lordship here, on this dreadful night, so ill as you are?"

"Speak low," said Lord Warleigh. "I've come to you—to see you again; to compare your features with—Help! set me down; my head grows giddy."

Benford helped him into a chair, drew it near the fire, and chafed his hand between his palms.

"Can you touch it without a shudder?" said Lord Warleigh. "Don't you feel that it is not like other people's hands?"

Conscience kept Benford silent; he ceased to rub the hand, and let it fall.

"There! again he interferes!" said the old man in a broken voice. "I see him lifting your hand away."

"Who?" said Benford. "There's no one here."

"There is. There is some one here who has never left my side for fifty years. Nothing will soothe him, nothing will drive him away. At feasts he sits on my right hand; alone, he sits opposite and stares into my face. Now he smiles—how like you are!"

"Your lordship is very ill. Have you sent for Dr. Jones?"

"No—don't talk of doctors. I tell you they can do no good. I've come to you to-night. I couldn't bear the room I sat in—there were voices in it, and people all round me. He was there and spoke to me of Aladdin's palace and his salary as physician. Haven't I paid his fees to his relations? But that's not sufficient. Well, more—I will pay more. He shakes his head—and perhaps it is enough—"

"I do not know what your lordship alludes to, but I beg you to be composed."

"Listen!" said old Lord Warleigh. "It was not his body—it was a stranger; and the thought came into my head to call the sufferer him. It lulled suspicion. I saw his sister, his mother, his cousin. They all seemed to have found me out. When I touched their hands, they drew them away. I was a pariah—a leper. No one looked kindly on me. When I spoke of our engagement, she turned away her head. When I said that when I had three-thousand a-year I would claim her promise, she said to me, 'Arthur, if you had millions in your purse, I would not wed you now. I saw Ellen. I told her of his fate. She was silent and looked into my eyes. I knew she saw my soul as it lay trembling, struggling, trying to hide itself under the shadow of that great fact. She pined and pined, and her father's heart broke; and I was rich—I was Sir Arthur Hayning—I was Lord Warleigh, and what am I now?'"

"You are Lord Warleigh, my lord. I beseech you to be calm."

"But you won't ask me to go back to the Broombank—it was there I built the castle. The library is above the very spot where the plant grew with the metal in its roots. I won't go there, for to-night—to-night is the anniversary of the time. The lanthorn shone upon the heath; the pick-axe was plying in the hole; there was a heap of earth thrown out, and six, eight, ten feet down, the busy labourer was at work; the spade was on the heaped up soil—I saw it flash in the light of the lanthorn as it flew into the air; its edge went down—I saw it fall. There was silence then and for ever in the pit. I filled it up with my feet—with my hands. I levelled it on the top. I beat it down. I built great halls above it; but it won't stay quiet. Sounds come from it up into my library, night and day; and at ten o'clock I hear a step, I see a face, its eyes on mine; and to-night, the worst of all the year. I cannot go home!"

"Your lordship is most welcome to remain. I will order a bed."

"No, not a bed. I shall never lie in a bed again. See, he rises! Give me your hand; and look!"

Lord Warleigh held Benford's hand, and looked to his right side. The fire was dull—the candles had burned nearly down. Benford was not a superstitious nor a timid man, but there was something in Lord Warleigh's manner that alarmed him. He looked where he pointed; and, straining his eyes in the direction of his finger, he saw, or fancied he saw, a pale white face, growing palpable in the darkness, and fixing its calm, cold eyes upon his companion. For a moment, the empty air had gathered itself into form, and he could have persuaded himself that Lord Warleigh's description of what he perceived was true. But the hand fell away, the head drooped down upon his breast, and his lordship was asleep. An hour passed away. A clock in the passage sounded two; and Benford touched Lord Warleigh on the shoulder.

"Your lordship," he said, "you must find it cold here. Your bed will soon be ready."

But Lord Warleigh made no reply. Benford looked in his face; he spoke to him gently, loudly, but still no answering sign. No; not to the loudest trumpet-call that earthly breath can utter will that ear ever be open. Lord Warleigh had passed away, with all his wealth and all his miseries; and nothing remained but a poor old figure propped up in an arm-chair, with the fitful flames of the expiring fire throwing their lights and shadows on his stiff and motionless face.

Benford was greatly shocked, but a little honoured, too. It isn't every parsonage parlour where a lord with fifty thousand a-year condescends to die. He preached his lordship's funeral sermon to a vast congregation. He told of his charities—of his successful life; touched lightly on the slight aberrations of a mind enfeebled by years and honourable exertion; and trusted he had found peace, as he had died in the house, almost in the arms, of a clergyman. His lordship's estates were sold; the sum realised was to be applied to the foundation of schools and hospitals, but not a schoolroom or a ward was ever built. The will was contested. Heirs-at-law sprung up in all ranks of life; lawyers flourished; and finally Chancery swallowed up all. When the estate of Combe Warleigh changed hands, the castle was converted into a mill; the library was taken down, and a shaft sank where it had stood. When the workmen had descended about eight feet from the surface, they came to a skeleton, a lanthorn, and a spade. The curious thing was that the spade was deeply imbedded in the skull. Mr. Fungus the antiquary read a paper at the Archaeological Society, proving with certainty the body had been sacrificed by the Druids; and a controversy arose between

him and Dr. Toadstool, who clearly proved at the British Association that it was the grave of a suicide of the time of King Alfred. I am of a very different opinion; being a sensible man and not an antiquarian, I keep it to myself.

CHIP.

ENGLISH COOKERY.

APROPOS of Common Cookery, which we have recently dwelt upon, we translate the following letter of a lady tourist, from a German newspaper:—

"In the roasting and boiling of their meat, the English still adhere to the antediluvian traditions of their forefathers. They take enormous pieces and fling them into a kettle, or brown them on a spit so as to change their outward appearance, the inside remaining red and raw. The London hotel-keepers divide their store of meat into two sections—viz., into steaks which are broiled for individual customers, and into joints of such gigantic size that two of them would suffice to feed all the functionaries and clerks of the Vienna Hofkautzlei. These enormous lumps of meat are taken from the roasting-machine, and, redolent of blood and gravy, handed over to the guests.

"English gardeners produce beautiful vegetables; especially cauliflowers, of such enormous size and exquisite flavour, that I have never seen or heard of the like in any other country. But to admire them, is all that is vouchsafed to the stranger; for everything green is, in this country, dished up in a shockingly natural condition. Green peas, for instance, are not even thoroughly done—they are simply moistened and heated.

"The chapter of puddings I should like to skip; but for my deep sense of the tourist's duties. There is a fathomless gulf between English and French puddings and pastry. In England, all is awkwardness and stagnation of ideas, while the French pastrycook is nearly an artist, and all but a poet. The crust of London pastry, even when fresh, is tough, and tasteless; and those sweetly sour things, rhubarb tarts and puddings, beggar description. Enormous quantities of this terrible dish are daily consumed in London, to the signal dismay of the unintentional looker-on. When I consider the lamentable errors of British cookery in this respect, I fall involuntarily to look for a radical remedy. The inhabitants of this mighty isle are great and glorious in everything they undertake, and I see no reason why they should be so much behindhand in the culinary department of household science. Only a few days ago I met a friend from Bavaria—a man who had lived there many years in the British capital. That man's reminiscences cling, with deep and earnest passion to the 'Dampfundeln' of his own country, and he

gave me so harrowing an account of his sufferings; he spoke so feelingly of the dreadful qualities of the British puddings, that I resolved, if possible, to find the means for the removal of this odious grievance. And I have found the means. The culinary condition of the English is so bad, that nothing but a root and branch reform will ever do them good. With respect to pastry and sweetmeats, there is but one way, and one way only to stem the tide. Let Parliament decree that a Vienna Mehlspeis Köchin, or a female cook of puddings, be forthwith engaged, brought over to England, and endowed with a salary, which ought at least to equal the sum which was paid to Jenny Lind, for the purpose of enabling so meritorious a female to devote all her energies to the good of the nation. The money laid out for such a purpose would bear an interest in health, comfort, and enjoyment, when no trace remains of the fabulous sums which were paid for the warblings of the Swedish Nightingale."

EARLY DAYS IN DULMINSTER.

I was born in Dulminster, and spent my childhood there; but no more of my life. For one reason and another, when I look back from Manhood, London, eighteen hundred and fifty-six, to Childhood, Dulminster, eighteen hundred and twenty, it seems to me that I must have been born at least a century ago. Yet I lack not a few years even of such a number as three-score-and-ten. I can remember only dimly black scaffolds, files of mourning coaches filled with men in white hats with crape hat-bands, rows of men with black flags marching along; Radicals, bound for the Town Moor, to concoct a petition about parliamentary reform. I can remember, dimly, hearing the guns fire at our castle, seeing wine in our gutters, smelling roast ox in the market-place, and tasting tallow-candle all the evening at home, when we were rejoicing and illuminating because George the Fourth was crowned.

Out of those early days come dreamy memories of superstition. The streets at night were dismal; for we had no gas; and a phantom dog was believed to trot beside doctors, nurses, and all persons going to and from the sick. The dog, it was said, trotted off with a cheerful bark of good-bye at the threshold, when the patient in the house was destined to recover; but evil-omened was its piercing howl. Abed of nights, as I lay awake, never a dog howled without telling me that somebody's death-warrant was sealed. In our Spitalfield, there was a ring of bare ground, trodden at night, of course, by the fiends. In a particular field, about a mile and a-half from the town, there was the ghost of a white lady who appeared only when the moon was in a

particular position. It was only by persons crossing a certain stile that she could then be seen, gliding mysteriously out of a dark wood. Evidently this was the spirit of a lady who had been slain close to the stile, at some past time, when the moon stood in that position in the sky, to see the murder done, and she had been dragged into the wood for burial. An old woman afterwards told me, that, on a winter evening, her only child having suddenly been taken ill, she hurried to the doctor; and, to save a considerable round, made bold to climb the stile, and run across the haunted field. The white spectre darted up before her from the border of the wood; and, when she returned by the same road with the doctor, there was nothing to be seen. She pointed out where the white lady had stood. The doctor went next night, at the right hour to see her, saw her, went up to her, and found only a long pool of water with a rude resemblance to the figure of a woman. The dark relief of the surrounding trees caused the pool, when the moonlight caught its surface, to appear as if it stood erect before them. We never believed that in Dulminster, and it added only to the legend that the body of the lady murdered at the stile had been carried or dragged over the grass, and thrown into the pool.

Ghost stories belonged to nearly all our streets. Many a deed of violence was done in them, or under the shadows of our gloomy gateways, crumbling towers, and thick walls. Our streets were narrow, winding hither and thither up and down steep places, full of houses of Elizabeth's time, and perhaps older, that projected story over story, till on the sky side, in many places, opposite neighbours might take light from one another's pipes. As for the castle, the whole history of England seemed to have been scratched over it, or thumped against it. There was an old church-bell, too, in the town, that used to sound the hour for all good little boys to go to bed. I used to go to bed by it. It was my curfew.

At the Theatre Royal, Dulminster, ghosts, robbers, murderers, were at home. How much a-year the manager spent on blue fire I have wondered since; but then I used to think that he really had, underneath his stage, that entrance to the pit you read about in Virgil. There was a Mademoiselle Alecto, who hissed at us in all the leading parts; but never a serpent in all Dulminster dared to hiss at her. She was an appreciated woman. But we had appreciated, also, Mrs. Siddons and the Kembles. The greatest of old-man comedians was born in Dulminster.

We patronised the drama in the good old way. No tradesman, however wealthy or worthy, would have been so audacious as to intrude himself or his family into the dress-circle among sacred turbans of the ladies of the old town families and county people.

Gracious only knows what might have happened after a tradesman—possibly a Radical—had sat upon the sacred benches! Dulminster folk, who went so far and fast as that, might find their way to London in seven hours instead of seven days, ride their own coaches instead of horses, compass the world's destruction by obtaining radical reform. The British constitution never would have been expected to live many days after so great an outrage. In my early days, the chance of such an outrage never entered people's heads. The dress-circle was empty, except when a great star came down to shine among us. Then great was the frequentation of the small perfumer's shop at which the seats were let. Then, in due time, large and leathery four-wheeled vehicles of all sorts, including carriages and four with postilions, crowded the streets outside the theatre, and sedan-chairs blocked the way up in the lobby. The members for the town and those also for the county furnished a few more attractive nights by bespeaking each of them a play during the season. The officers at the barracks and several of the leading county families bestowed patronage by a bespeak. On such occasions the assembly in the dress-circle was more or less distinguished in proportion to the rank or popularity of the bespeaker; a large part of the pit was filled by tradesmen, with whom the old family of the bespeaker dealt, and with whose ancestors their ancestors had dealt for centuries. The foremost rows of the gallery accommodated a population of rosy-cheeked servants and farmers' daughters, with their dear brothers and dearer cousins; all of whom drove to the theatre merrily in carts and waggons.

It was not in the theatre alone that our old families maintained their dignity. We had among us many worthy merchants, ship-builders, ship-owners, and manufacturers; men of sterling integrity and great ability, who felt a hearty interest in the wellbeing of their native place. None of these persons ever became mayors or aldermen in Dulminster. The municipal dignities were all kept to themselves, by our old families. We—they, I mean—had a commodious mansion-house handsomely furnished, an establishment of servants, a stud of horses, and the state and private carriages provided for the mayor; who was, moreover, allowed two or three thousand pounds a-year wherewith to support the honour of his office. As our old families only intermarried with each other, nearly all the aldermen were more or less connected by relationship; and they chose as mayor one of their set whose decayed circumstances made him a fit object for such kindness.

Our elective body was composed of the freemen, who were sons of freemen, or had served a seven years' apprenticeship to any guild. It was the habit of a large number of

these freemen, even if in their private capacity they were sober, to be, in their elective capacity, what they called as drunk as a lord. On certain days the bell of an old church tolled for an hour and brought our freemen up to the guildhall, where they were met by the high functionaries, and where measures were discussed between both parties for the profit of the town. The benefit of the town was to be secured by the spending of the large revenues of the corporation. Radicals made themselves obnoxious at these meetings by tirades against abuses and shortcomings; but there was a way of stopping noisy mouths. The mouth of a blacksmith could be stopped by the discovery that a church steeple required clamping with iron, and that he had better do the job; which would be paid for very liberally by the corporation. If a painter became troublesome, the corporation waxed impatient of the dingy walls of half its property, and even of the No Popery scrawled over all its palings, and invited Mr. Painter with all speed to make things pleasanter. For noisy persons not possessing businesses, there were provided subsidies from the town-hutch, or treasury. This system of keeping growlers quiet, was called giving them a bone to pick.

It was a great time for freemen when the day came for the annual mayor-choosing in the Spital School. Small boys attired as Guys, and blowing penny trumpets, took possession of the streets that morning; and, with a cry of Choose a new Mayor, levied a large copper duty upon Dulminster. The freemen had a glorious procession along streets new dusted with sand; and, at the dinner table, they fared sumptuously.

The manufacture of M.P.'s at Dulminster I do not speak of as anything particularly glorious, since it was no more than a part of every freeman's business; one of those branches of commerce in which the town had obtained for itself some little distinction, and from which its inhabitants derived a fixed revenue. When an election was expected, freemen lost no time in looking out for likely candidates; preferring young men who belonged to their old families, who had the key of the old family cashbox, and who lived not farther than the distance of a pleasant walk out of the town. The last qualification they desired, because it was usual at Dulminster for the freemen on Sundays and half-holidays to stroll off in troops to the houses of their members for a taste of their strong ale, and a general investigation of their pantries. The right sort of man having been found, thirty or forty of our independent electors used to proceed to him, in his parlour, with a complimentary address and a formal requisition that he would come forward to protect the British Constitution. They then sat down to his table, and ate heartily from mighty joints of roast and boiled. The oldest ale was broached for these important freemen; choice wines (or wine with choice

names) were uncorked, and healths were drunk in spirituous liquors. The requisitionists didn't go home till morning; and some of them were usually picked up next day snoring in the plantations, among which — old inhabitants as they all were — they had lost their way. That was the beginning of the rescue of the constitution. In the course of a few days, to the joy of the freemen, their raw parliamentary material would be converted into a candidate for their enlightened suffrages, and the author of a printed statement of political opinions. Committees were immediately formed on his behalf at all the inns and public-houses, where every man ate and drank at the young gentleman's expense. Freemen in want of money became messengers with, for the time, the salaries of ministers of state. Bell-ringing and horn-blowing became familiar to us as the chirps of sparrows. The old members issued their addresses, and the contest was alive. Trade was alive. All the old families were at work shopping and canvassing; there was nothing in Dulminster that of an independent elector they would not buy and pay for. The ladies who wore turbans in the dress circle of the Theatre Royal, were almost ready to be kissed by the master chimney-sweep, if such a condescension were preferred by him to money, as the value of his plumper. All was equality, fraternity, and love, with every day scandal against somebody, placarded through the streets and left upon shop counters, and the best of fighting always going on at pothouse doors, in the churchyard, and in the market-place.

Election time was not the only source of harvest to the innkeepers. They had harvest, indeed, all the year round. Our hostleries of course were classified: there were the hotels frequented by the county families, friends of old families, and persons on a level with the ladies in the turbans; there were the commercial inns of several grades, shared, with commercial travellers, by small landed proprietors, colliery agents, viewers, and the upper class of farmers. There were long, rambling, out of the way buildings, with yards, chambers, stables, lofts, and taprooms, gathered in a maze; to which country people, pitmen, and their wives, and many more betook themselves on a great number of occasions.

Those were, of course, days of coaching. Mails, and stage-coaches rattled over our stones: there was a blowing of great horns by night and day, a rumbling of travelling carriages, and a great deal of crack and flourish. Commercial travellers came in a throng of gigs. Our largest commercial hotel would have eighty such travellers arriving in one evening; each with a gig or saddle-horse to put up in the stables. Ostlers made money in those days; and jolly times they were then in the travellers' room at the Dolphin. Great mercantile houses prided themselves on the

address of their travellers, the sleekness of their travellers' horses, and the good condition of their traveller's vehicles. Part of the travellers' good address lay in their cheerfulness over the bottle. Business was done in Dulminster over strong ale, and something stronger. The traveller succeeded best who had the strongest stomach. I remember a gentleman connected with the spirit trade, whose coming was eagerly looked forward to by all who knew him. He was full of good songs and merry stories; pronounced on all hands to be "as kind a hearted creature as ever broke the world's bread." I don't know anything of his capacity for bread; but I have been assured that he was man enough to drink, with different customers, forty glasses of different wines and spirits between breakfast and dinner; and, after dinner, in the travellers' room, to keep the joke and bottle going with the stoutest and jolliest. Fresh air and exercise could scarcely make head against all this toping, and many a commercial traveller was finished up after a very few years of such industry.

The less respectable sort of travellers—those who did not travel in gigs, but carried small packets of specimens, and journeyed by stage coach—put up at a class of commercial houses, much frequented by the farmers who came trotting into Dulminster on market days, often with their wives, carrying market-baskets perched behind them on a pillion or on a second saddle. We had then no covered Corn Market. The farmers stood in rows behind their sacks of samples, in the square that fronted our old church. In the same place was assembled the millers and corn-factors; each corn-factor provided with a small portable desk; and, in a few hours, the business was got through between them. During the same hours, the farmers' wives, dispersed about the town, were driving bargains with the housekeepers of Dulminster for eggs and butter. Business over, all flocked to the inns.

From the adjacent collieries came also in long carts on market days, the pitmen and their wives, to buy their stocks of grocery meat, and flour. They came as gentlemen to combine business with pleasure, dressed in their best clothes,—a blue-tailed coat, with a bunch of marigolds stuck in the bosom, gaudy flowered waistcoat, with a bunch of official-looking seals hung by a radiant ribbon, plush breeches, blue worsted stockings, buckled shoes—a gorgeous creature was a pitman in our early days at Dulminster. He even wore a beaver hat with a narrow brim. The pitmen and their wives, dressed as became the wives of such husbands, with the wages of themselves and sons hot in their pockets, did not confine their expenditure to necessities. While the wives bought the meat and grocery, the husbands went to their inns, and smoked pipes over ale and dominoes, or ale and quots; or else they betook them-

selves to the cockpits, and betted on the main. While making their purchases, the women had, at every shop, a glass of neat rum or rum shrub; so that, towards evening they came back merry to their partners for a dance; and, after many more potations accompanied with a most frightful leaping and stamping of feet, and many little squabbles which produced nothing but fresh agonies of noise—they were assorted again into their carts as nearly as could be guessed, and trotted out of Dulminster; some of them quite in the wrong direction. At about the same time in the evening, the farmers were getting into their saddles; and, considering how many of them needed to be lifted and settled in their seats, it is remarkable that so few necks were broken from year to year.

Then, again, there were to each inn its regular attendants. Punctually at eight o'clock every night, respectable elderly men dropped in upon each other in one of the great panelled parlours of the Dolphin, called each for a pint of best ale and a pipe, exchanged pinches of snuff with one another, and, by half-past eight, the whole club of old men, as they were called, being assembled, the Globe and Traveller and the local paper were produced before them. One of them read aloud the leading news, and then all fell to conversation over it. A second pint of ale and one more pipe was the end of their night's allowance, except when, on extraordinary occasions, reason appeared for indulgence in a glass of grog, or for the brewing of a bowl of punch. At half-past ten, every old man went home, and went to bed.

But sobriety was not in fashion among younger folk. Very early in the summer afternoons, Dulminster tradesmen became numerous at their inns, seeking for rum and eggs or rum and milk, purl, and what other form there is of ale bedevilled. In the busiest time of the day, many shopkeepers thought nothing of running from their shops to spend three or four hours in the tavern; and, to be led home through the streets by daylight, helplessly drunk, was not thought matter of shame, or anything in the least degree tending to injure business. Working men with a little spare cash would go on Monday morning to the tap, and stick to the ale for as many days as money lasted. This wise financial stroke they called being out on the fuddle. Strong ale, and not gin, was the nectar chiefly in request; and innkeepers brewed their own ale, were true to malt and hops, stored it to acquire age, in enormous cellars, and dispensed, therefore, potations not so poisonous to health as those now furnished by the spirit-merchant and the brewhouse-chemist. I rather think, however, that there was more noise over the cups in Dulminster than belongs now to the pleasure of hard-drinking. We had among us many pensioned soldiers, who had fought under Sir John Moore and Wellington. They brought

with them more than the roar of battle in such songs as—

Lord Cornwallis was a brave commander !
 Lord Cornwallis was a brave commander !
 He conducts us over the plain
 As brave as Alexander.

Make ready—present !
 Gentlemen, fire !

(Every man raps his hardest on the table)

Lord Cornwallis, &c.

It was a comfort to think that there was less noise on a Sunday morning ; when the church-wardens went round to see that no tavern was open during hours of service, but winked amiably at the little parties that at such hours had retired to the bar-parlour.

Pedlars, of course, were numerous in all the smaller hosteleries. Such men dealt largely in horn-spectacles and great shagreen tobacco-boxes. There came also to Dulminster travelling teamen, whose vilest congou cost eight shillings a pound ; and these persons also carried little packs of fine linen and silk.

Most of our own tradesmen marched through the streets, on their respective saints' days, carrying in procession masterpieces of their art. Every day, also, women were to be seen carrying on trades not altogether feminine. There were among us many female bricklayers, who went up and down ladders all day long, carrying hods of bricks or mortar to their lords or masters. Women also bore on their backs heavy loads of meat out of the slaughter-houses to the butchers' shops, supported by a strap round their forehead. It was by women, also, that the heavy loads of sand to be used in house-cleaning, or for strewing upon floors, were carried about.

Our Dulminster police consisted, I think, of twelve sergeants and one sergeant-major. A higher functionary there was, who must have been in some manner connected with the sheriff. The next of the force was denoted by the painted boards to be seen in various small streets, inscribed N. or M., Constable ; N. or M. was a shoemaker or tailor, or a member of some other sedentary trade, likely to be at home if wanted, and glad to turn a penny by defending law and order to his latest days. If there was a fight in any street or other breach of order, men ran for a constable, as now in case of accident they would run for a surgeon ; knocked at the first constable's house, and if they wanted him to follow them, gave him a shilling. Then, if constable N. thought the chance of damage or discomfort to himself, not greater than a shilling would make good, he went. If he foresaw a case of difficulty, he pleaded some good reason for sticking to his shoemaking or tailoring, and directed them the shortest way to the house of Constable M.

The town-sergeants were a higher class of men, who walked before his lordship the judge at assizes wearing cocked-hat and purple gown, and with a huge bouquet fixed in a richly chased silver-gilt holder of King Charles's time, carefully fastened upon each official bosom. They were pretty well conducted men, who knew how much depended upon their deportment and proper maintenance of the high dignity of their position. The mayor, through his sergeant, licensed every show and entertainment coming to the town ; and we were sometimes edified by a sharp contest between the mayor's sergeant and some unlicensed Merry Andrew glib of tongue. Glib as he might be he was always crushed under the bulk of beadlehood, brought down upon him for his summary suppression.

The night-watch was a very feeble force, composed of old men fat and old men lean, of old men short and old men tall, of old men squeaky, old men gruff, who were required to prove their wakefulness to the inhabitants by calling out the hours and half-hours of the night. Remarkably short nights used to be in Dulminster, if there were no more hours in them than the night-watch owned to.

From these functionaries the mind passes without much of a jolt to the town idiots. These poor creatures, now confined within the workhouse bounds, used, in my early days, to be allowed to roam about the streets of Dulminster, well-known to all the boys and all the dogs. I cannot dwell on these afflictions. There was a poor fellow, called Captain Starkey, who wore a cocked-hat, bowed with profuse courtesy to any decent persons whom he met, and gave them promissory notes, of his own manufacture, in exchange for halfpence. There was another poor creature who gloried in the print-shop, and would explain such pictures as he understood—chiefly the Bible prints, for which he gave chapter and verse—to any boy or boys who came about him. We had a blind idiot, too,—Blind Willie—who had a presence something like that ascribed to Doctor Johnson, and whose joy it was for meat and drink and money to sing at the inns, and play upon his dear companion, the fiddle. There were persons in the parish-house, at which he slept, who shared the money profit of fiddling. One day, in a quarrel among themselves over poor Willie's coppers, one of them turning upon Willie, broke his fiddle across his official knee, and then stamped it to pieces. From that day Blind Willie sang his songs without accompaniment, but he took more beer than he formerly cared for ; and, though he lived for many years after and died old, the workhouse-nurse, who tended him, said, that he died with a fiddle on his mind.

"Familiar in their Mouths as HOUSEHOLD WORDS."—SHAKESPEARE.

HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

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HOUSELESS AND HUNGRY.

IN the city of London, in two contiguous thoroughfares—the shabbiest, dingiest, poorest of their class—there are two Houses of Poverty. To the first, entrance is involuntary, and residence in it compulsory. You are brought there by a catchpole, and kept there under lock and key until your creditors are paid, or till you have suffered the purgatory of an Insolvent Court remand. This house is the Debtor's Prison of Whitecross Street. I know it. I have seen the mysteries of the Middlesex side, and have heard the lamenting in the Poultry Ward. Its stones have sermons; but it was not to hear them that I travelled, last Tuesday evening, Cripplegate-ward. My business in Whitecross Street was of no debtor or creditor nature; for I was there to visit another house of poverty, the asylum of the Society for affording Nightly Shelter to the Houseless.

Let me, in the first instance, state briefly what this society professes to do. The manner in which it is done will form a subject for after-description. "It is the peculiar object and principle of this charity" (I quote the report) "to afford nightly shelter and assistance to those who are really houseless and destitute during inclement winter seasons, and the occasional suspension of outdoorwork, in consequence of the rigour of the weather. To fulfil this intention, it is provided that an asylum shall be open and available at all hours of the night, without the need, on the part of the applicant, of a ticket, or any other passport or plea but his or her own statement of helpless necessity." The relief afforded is limited to bread in a sufficient quantity to sustain nature, warm shelter, and the means of rest. Thus, little inducement is offered to those removed in the slightest degree from utter destitution, to avail themselves of the shelter for the sake of the food. But, in all cases of inanition or debility from exhaustion or fatigue, appropriate restoratives, such as gruel, wine, brandy, soup and medicine, are administered under medical superintendence. "Many have been thus rescued," says the report, "from the grasp of death."

I have two friends who do not approve of institutions on the principle stated above.

My good friend Pragmos objects to them as useless. He proves to me by figures, by tables, by reports from perspicacious commissioners, that there is no need of any destitution in London; and that, statistically, tabularly, honourable-boardically-speaking, there is no destitution at all. How *can* there be any destitution with your outdoor relief, and your indoor relief, your workhouse test, your relieving officers and your casual ward? Besides, there is employment for all. There are hospitals and infirmaries for the sick, workhouse infirmaries for the infirm. Prosperity, the war notwithstanding, is continually increasing. None but the idle and the dissolute need be houseless and hungry. If they are, they have the union to apply to; and, consequently, asylums for the houseless serve no beneficial end; divert the stream of charitable donations from its legitimate channels; foster idleness and vice, and parade, before the eyes of the public, a misery that does not exist.

So far Pragmos. He is not hard-hearted; but simply, calmly conscious (through faith in Arabic numerals, and in the ninety-ninth report of the Poor Law Commissioners) that destitution cannot be. But, he has scarcely finished quoting schedule D, when my other and sprightlier friend Sharplynx takes me to task, humorously, jocularly. He rallies me. "Destitution, my boy," says Sharplynx, familiarly, "gammon! How can you, a shrewd man of the world" (I blush), "an old stager" (I bow), "be taken in by such transparent humbug! Haven't you read the Times? Haven't you read the Jolly Beggars? Did you never hear of cadgers, silver-beggars, shallow-coves? Why sir, that fellow in rags with the imitation paralysis, who goes shivering along, will have veal for supper to-night: the kidney end of the loin, with stuffing, and a lemon squeezed over it. That woman on the doorstep has hired the two puny children at fourpence a-day; and she will have a pint and a-half of gin before she goes to bed. That seemingly hectic fever flush, is red paint; those tremblings are counterfeited; that quiet, hopeless, silent resignation is a dodge. Don't talk to me of being houseless and hungry! The impostors who pretend to be so, carouse in night cellars. They have turkey and sausages, roast pork,

hot punch, paramours, packs of cards, and roaring songs. Houseless, indeed! I'd give 'em a night's lodging—in the station-house, and send 'em to the treadmill in the morning." Whereupon Sharplynx departs; muttering something about the good old times, and the stocks, and the whipping-post.

So they go their separate ways—Pragmos and Sharplynx—yet I cannot blame either of them. It is but the old story of the many punished, for the faults of a few. You, I, thousands, are coerced, stinted in our enjoyments, comforts, amusements, liberties, rights, and are defamed and vilified as drunkards and ruffians, because one bull-necked, thick-lipped, scowling beast of a fellow, drinks himself mad with alcohol, beats his wife, breaks windows, and roams about Drury Lane with a life-preserver. Thousands—whose only crime it is to have no money, no friends, no clothes, no place of refuge equal even to the holes that the foxes have in God's wide world—see the hand of charity closed, and the door of mercy shut, because Alice Grey is an impostor, and Bamfylde Moore Carew a cheat; and because there have been such places as the Cour des Miracles, and Rats' Castle. "Go there and be merry, you rogue!" says Mr. Sharplynx, facetiously. So the destitute go into the streets, and die. They do die; although you may continue talking and tabulating till Doomsday. I grant the workhouses, relieving officers, hospitals, infirmaries, station-houses, boards, minutes, and schedules, the Mendicity Society, and the Guildhall Solomons. But I stand with Galileo: *Si muove!* and asseverate that, in the city paved with gold, there are people who are destitute, and die on door-steps, in the streets, on staircases, under dark arches, in ditches, and under the lees of walls. The police know it. Some day, perhaps, the government will condescend to know it too, and instruct a gentleman at a thousand a-year to see about it.

Thinking of Pragmos and Sharplynx, I walked last Tuesday evening through Smith-field and up Barbican. It is a very dreary journey at the best of times; but, on a raw February night—with the weather just hesitating between an iron frost and a drizzling thaw, and not making up its mind on either subject, treating you to a touch of both alternately—the overland route to Whitecross Street is simply wretched. The whole neighbourhood is pervaded with a miasma of grinding, unwholesome, sullen, and often vicious poverty. Everything is cheap and nasty; and the sellers seem as poor as the buyers. There are shops whose stock-in-trade is not worth half-a-dozen shillings. There are passers-by, the whole of whose apparel would certainly be dear at nine-pence. Chandlers' shops, marine stores, pawn-shops, and public houses, occur over and over again in sickening repetition. There is a frowsy blight on the window-panes and the gas-lamps. The bread is all seconds; the

butchers' shops, with their flaring gas-jets, expose nothing but scraps and bony pieces of meat. Inferior greengrocery in baskets chokes up the pathway; but it looks so bad that it would be a pity to rescue it from its neighbour the gutter, and its legitimate proprietors the pigs. The air is tainted with exhalations from rank tobacco, stale herrings, old clothes, and workshops of noxious trades. The parish coffin passes you; the policeman passes you, dull and dingy—quite another policeman compared to the smart A Sixty-seven. The raw night-breeze wafts to your ears oaths, and the crying of rotten merchandise, and the wailing of neglected children, and choruses of ribald songs. Every cab you see blocked up between a costermonger's barrow and a Pickford's van, appears to you to be conveying some miserable debtor to prison.

Struggling, as well as I could, through all this squalid life; slipping on the greasy pavement, and often jostled off it, I came at last upon Whitecross Street, and dived (for that is about the only way you can enter it) into a forlorn, muddy, dimly-lighted thoroughfare, which was the bourne of my travels—Playhouse Yard. I have not Mr. Peter Cunningham at hand, and am not sufficient antiquary to tell when or where abouts the playhouse existed in this sorry place. It is but a melancholy drama enacted here now, Heaven knows!

I was not long in finding out the Refuge. About half-way up the yard hung out a lamp with a wire screen over it, and the name of the asylum painted upon it. I made my way to an open doorway whence issued a stream of light; and, before which, were ranged in a widish semi-circle a crowd of cowering creatures, men, women, and children, who were patiently awaiting their turn of entrance. This was the door to the House of Poverty.

I need not say that the object of my visit was promptly understood by those in authority, and that every facility was afforded me of seeing the simple system of relief at work. It was not much in a sight-seeing point of view, that the society's officers had to show me. They had no pet prisoners; no steam-cooking apparatus; no luxurious baths; no corrugated iron laundry; no vaulted passages, nor octagonal court-yards gleaming with white-wash and dazzling brass-work; no exquisite cells fitted up with lavatories and cupboards, and conveniences of the latest patent invention. Everything was, on the contrary, of the simplest and roughest nature; yet everything seemed to me to answer admirably the purpose for which it was designed.

I entered, first, an office, where there were some huge baskets filled with pieces of bread; and where an official sat at a desk registering, in a ledger, the applicants for admission as they presented themselves for examination at the half-door or bar. They

came up one by one, in alternate sexes, as they had been summoned from the semicircle outside. Now it was a young sailor-boy in a Guernsey frock; now a travel-stained agricultural labourer; now a wan artisan; now a weary ragged woman with a troop of children; now, most pitiable spectacle of all, some woe-begone, shrinking needlewoman—young, but a hundred years old in misery—comely, but absolutely seamed and scarred and macerated by famine. The answers were almost identical: They had come up from the country in search of work; or they were London bred, and could not obtain work; or the Union was full, and they could not get admission; or they had no money; or they had had nothing to eat; or they did not know where else to go. All this was said not volubly; not entreatingly; and with no ejaculations or complaints and with few additions; but wearily, curtly, almost reluctantly. What had they to tell? What beyond a name, a date, a place, was necessary to be extracted from them? In their dismal attire, in their deathlike voices, in their awful faces, there was mute eloquence enough to fill five hundred ledgers such as the one on the desk. I am no professed physiognomist. I believe I have sufficient knowledge of the street-world to tell a professional beggar from a starving man; but I declare I saw no face that night passing the hatch but in which I could read: Ragged and Tired—Dead Beat—Utterly Destitute—Houseless and Hungry. The official took down each applicant's name, age, and birthplace; where he had slept the night before; what was his vocation; what the cause of his coming there. The ledger was divided into columns for the purpose. I looked over it. To the causes for application there was one unvarying answer—Destitution. In the "Where slept the previous night?" the answers ran: St. Luke's; Whitechapel; in the streets; Stepney; in the streets, in the streets, and in the streets again and again, till I grew sick. Many men are liars, we know; and among the five hundred destitute wretches that are nightly sheltered in this place there may be—I will not attempt to dispute it—a per-centage of impostors; a few whose own misconduct and improvidence have driven them to the wretchedest straits; yet, I will back that grim ledger to contain some thousand more truths than are told in a whole library of reports of parliamentary committees.

There was a lull in the admissions, and I was inquiring about the Irish, when the official told the doorkeeper to "call the first female." By luck, the "first female" was Irish herself. She was a very little woman, with the smallest bonnet I ever saw. It was, positively, nothing more than a black patch on the back of her head, and the frayed ends were pulled desperately forward towards her chin, showing her ears through a ragged

trellis-work. As to her dress, it looked as if some cunning spinner had manufactured a textile fabric out of mud; or, as if dirt could be darned and patched. I did not see her feet; but I heard a flapping on the floor as she moved, and guessed what sort of shoes she must have worn. She was the sort of little woman who ought to have had a round, rosy, dumpling face—and she had two bead-like black eyes; but face and eyes were all crushed and battered by want and exposure. Her very skin was in rags. The poor little woman did nothing but make faces, which would have been ludicrous, if—in the connection of what surrounded and covered her, and her own valiant determination not to cry—they had not been heart-rending. Yes; she was Irish, (she said this apologetically); but, she had been a long time in Liverpool. Her husband had run away and left her. She had no children. She could have borne it better, she said, if she had. She had slept one night before in the "Institution" (she prided herself a little on this word, and used it pretty frequently), but she had been ashamed to come there again, and had slept one night in the workhouse and three nights in the streets. The superintendent spoke to her kindly, and told her she could be sheltered in the Refuge for a night or two longer; and that then, the best thing she could do would be to make her way to Liverpool again. "But I can't walk it, indeed," cried the little woman; "I shall never be able to walk it. O, dear! O, dear!" The valorously screwed-up face broke down all at once; and, as she went away with her ticket, I heard her flapping feet and meek sobs echoing through the corridor. She did not press her story on us. She did not whine for sympathy. She seemed ashamed of her grief. Was this little woman a humbug, I wonder?

A long lank man in black mud came up afterwards; whose looks seemed fluttering between the unmistakable "ragged and tired" and an ominous "ragged and desperate." I shall never forget his hands as he held them across on the door-sill—long, emaciated, bony slices of integument and bone. They were just the hands a man might do some mischief to himself or some one else with, and be sorry for. I shall never forget, either, the rapt eager gaze with which he regarded, almost devoured, the fire in the office grate. He answered the questions addressed to him, as it were mechanically, and without looking at his interlocutor. His whole attention, wishes, thoughts, being centred in the blazing coals. He seemed to hug himself in the prospective enjoyment of the warmth; to be greedy of it. Better the fire there, than the water of the dark cold river. I was not sorry when he received his ticket; and, looking over his shoulder at the fire, went shuffling away. He frightened me. I was informed by the superintendent

(a frank-spoken military man, who had lost a leg in the Caffre war), that, as a rule, the duration of the shelter extended by the society is limited to three nights to Londoners, and to seven nights to country people. In special cases, however, special exceptions are made; and every disposition is shown to strain a point in favour of those weary wanderers, and to bear with them, as far as is consistent with justice to others. A ration of eight ounces of bread is given to each admitted person on entrance, another ration when they leave between eight and nine the next morning.

Accompanied by the secretary and the superintendent, I was now shown the dormitories. We visited the men's side first. Passing a range of lavatories, where each inmate is required to wash his face, neck, and arms; hot water being provided for the purpose; we ascended a wooden staircase, and came into a range of long, lofty, barn-like rooms, divided into sections by wooden pillars. An immense stove was in the centre, fenced in with stakes;¹ and, in its lurid hospitable light, I could fancy the man in black and some score more brothers in misery, greedily basking. Ranged on either side were long rows of bedplaces, trough-like, grave-like, each holding one sleeper. In the early days of the society (it has been in existence for more than thirty years) the inmates slept on straw; but, as this was found to possess many drawbacks to health, cleanliness, and to offer danger from fire, mattresses stuffed with hay and covered with waterproofing, which can be washed and aired with facility, have been substituted. Instead of blankets, which harbour vermin and are besides less durable, there are ample coverlets of Basil leather, warm and substantial. With these; with the ration of bread; with genial warmth, the objects sought for are attained. It is not an hotel that is required. The slightest modicum of luxury would corroborate Pragmos, and be an encouragement to the worthless, the idle, and the depraved. The Refuge competes with no lodging-house, no thieves' kitchen, no tramps' boozing-cellar; but it is a place for a dire corporeal necessity to be ministered to, by the simplest corporeal requisites. A roof to shelter, a bed to lie on, a fire to warm, a crust to eat—these are offered to those who have literally nothing.

By the flickering gas, which is kept burning all night, I stood with my back to one of the wooden pillars, and looked at this sad scene. The bed-places were rapidly filling. Many of the tired-out wayfarers had already sunk into sleep; others were sitting up in bed mending their poor rags; many lay awake, but perfectly mute and quiescent. As far as the eye could reach, almost, there were more ranges of troughs, more reclining heaps of rags. I shifted my position nervously as I found myself within range, wherever I turned, of innumerable eyes,—

eyes calm, fixed, brooding, hopeless. Who has not had this feeling, while walking through an hospital, a lunatic asylum, a prison? The eyes are upon you, you know, gazing sternly, moodily, reproachfully. You feel almost as if you were an intruder. You are not the doctor to heal, the priest to console, the Lady Bountiful to relieve. What right have you to be there, taking stock of human miseries, and jotting down sighs and tears in your note-book?

I found the surgeon at a desk by the fire. He had just been called in to a bad case; one that happened pretty frequently, though. The miserable case was just being supported from a bench to his bed. He had come in, and had been taken very ill; not with cholera, or fever, or dysentery, but with the disease my friend, Sharplynx, won't believe in—Starvation. He was simply at death's door with inanition and exhaustion. Drunk with hunger, surfeited with cold, faint with fatigue. He did not require amputation nor cupping, quinine, colchicum, nor sarsaparilla; he merely wanted a little brandy and gruel, some warmth, some supper and a bed. The cost price of all these did not probably amount to more than sixpence; yet, curiously, for want of that six-pennyworth of nutriment and rest, there might have been a bill on the police station door to-morrow, beginning, Dead Body Found.

I asked the surgeon, if such cases occurred often. They did, he said: Whether they ever ended fatally? Occasionally. Only the other night a man was brought in by a police sergeant, who had found him being quietly starved to death behind a cart. He was a tall, athletic-looking man enough, and was very sick. While the sergeant was stating his case, he suddenly fell forward on the floor—dead! He was not diseased, only starved.

Seeking for information as to the general demeanour of the inmates, I was told that good conduct was the rule, disorderly or refractory proceedings the exception. "If you were here at eight o'clock, sir," said the superintendent (it was now half-past seven), "you wouldn't hear a pin drop. Poor creatures! they are too tired to make a disturbance. The boys, to be sure, have a little chat to themselves; but they are easily quieted. When, once in a way, we have a disorderly character, we turn him out, and there is an end of it." I was told, moreover, that almost anything could be done with this motley colony by kind and temperate language, and that they expressed, and appeared to feel, sincere gratitude for the succour afforded to them. They seldom made friends among their companions, the superintendent said. They came, and ate, and warmed themselves, and went on their way in the morning, alone. There is a depth of misery too great for companionship.

Touching the boys, those juveniles were relegated to a plantation of troughs by themselves, where they were plunging and tumbling about in the usual manner of town-nursed Bedouins. I learnt that the institution—to use a familiar expression—rather fought shy of boys. Boys are inclined to be troublesome; and, whenever it is practicable, they are sent to the ragged school dormitories, where, my guide said, “they make them go to school before they go to bed, which they don’t like at all.” More than this, some parents, to save themselves the trouble of providing supper and bedding for their children, will send one or more of them to the Refuge; and, where space is so vitally valuable, the introduction of even one interloper is a thing to be carefully prevented.

The Refuge is open after five in the evening, and a porter is on duty all night for the admission of urgent cases. The fires and gas are also kept burning throughout the night, and a male and female superintendent sit up, in case of need. Those who have been in the Refuge on Saturday night, have the privilege of remaining in the institution during the whole of Sunday. They have an extra ration of bread and three ounces of cheese, and divine service is performed in the morning and afternoon. There are many Sabbaths kept in London: the Vinegar Sabbath, the Velvet and Satin Sabbath, the Red Hot Poker Sabbath, the carriage-and-pair Sabbath, the gloomily-lazy Sabbath, the pipe-and-pot Sabbath; but I doubt if any can equal the Sabbath passed in this wretched Playhouse Yard, as a true Sabbath of rest, and peace, and mercy.

We went up, after this, to the women’s wards. The arrangements were identical with those of the men; save, that one room, is devoted to women with families, where the partitions between the troughs had been taken away that the children might lie with their mothers. We passed between the ranges of bed-places; noticing that the same mournful, weary, wakeful silence, was almost invariable, though not, I was told, compulsory. The only prohibition—and safety requires this—is against smoking. Now and then, a gaunt girl with her black hair hanging about her face would rise up in her bed to stare at us; now and then, some tattered form amongst those who were sitting there till the ward below was ready for their reception, would rise from the bench and drop us a curtsy; but the general stillness was pervading and unvarying. A comely matron bustled about noiselessly with her assistant; who was a strange figure among all these rags; being a pretty girl in ringlets and ribbons. One seemed to have forgotten, here, that such a being could be in existence. I spoke to some of the women on the benches. It was the same old story. Needle-work at miserable prices, inability to pay the two-penny rent of a lodging, no friends,

utter destitution; this, or death. There were a few—and this class I heard was daily increasing—who were the wives of soldiers in the Militia, or of men in the Land Transport and Army Works Corps. Their husbands had been ordered away; they had no claim upon the regular Military Relief Association, they had received no portion of their husband’s pay—and they were houseless and hungry.

I stopped long to look down into the room where the women and children were. There they lay, God help them! head to heel, transversely, anyhow for warmth; nestling, cringing under the coverlets; at times feebly wailing. Looking down upon this solemn, silent, awful scene made you shudder; made you question by what right you were standing up, warm, prosperous, well-fed, well-clad, with these destitute creatures, your brothers and sisters, who had no better food and lodging than this? But for the absence of marble floors and tanks, the place might be some kennel for hounds; but for the rags and the eyes, these might be sheep in the pens in Smithfield Market.

I went down-stairs at last; for there was no more to see. Conversing further with the secretary, I gleaned that the average number of destitute persons admitted nightly is five hundred and fifty; but that as many as six hundred have been accommodated. Last year—when the asylum was open from the fifteenth of January, until (owing to the long duration of the inclement weather) the tenth of April—four thousand two hundred and eighty-nine individuals were admitted, thirty-six thousand eight hundred and fifteen night’s lodgings afforded, and one hundred and eight thousand two hundred and fifty-seven rations of bread distributed. Looking at the balance-sheet of the society, I found the total expense of the asylum (exclusive of rent), was less than one thousand pounds.

A thousand pounds! we blow it away in gunpowder; we spend it upon diplomatic fool’s caps; we give it every month in the year to right honourable noblemen for doing nothing, or for spoiling what ordinary men of business would do better. A thousand pounds! It would not pay a deputy sergeant at arms; it would scarcely be a retiring pension for an assistant prothonotary. A thousand pounds! Deputy-chaff-wax would have spurned it, if offered as compensation for loss of office. A thousand pounds! the sum jarred upon my ear, as I walked back through Smithfield. At least, for their ten hundred pounds, the Society for Sheltering the Houseless save some hundreds of human lives a-year.

I abide by the assertion, that men and women die nightly in our golden streets, because they have no bread to put into their miserable mouths, no roofs to shelter their wretched heads. It is no less a God-known,

man-neglected fact, that in any state of society in which such things can be, there must be something essentially bad, and rotten.

MY COUNTRY TOWN.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER THE FIRST.

I LEFT Winborough when I was twelve years old; and, before I saw it again, was a matron of thirty; but in the interval, my mind's picture of the old English town was as vivid as ever. I could see the wide square market-place, with what was called its cross in the centre, where the market-women drew snowy napkins from the primrose-tinted butter; where the whitest of cream cheese lay cradled in the greenest of cabbage-leaves; where stalls, like altars to Good Cheer, bore round hampers of ribstone pippins, and baking-pears, with pyramids of plums; while, at the base of the shrine, poultry cackled or crowed their unanimous objection to be selected for its victims. I could see the solid rolls of woollen ranged on the steps of Jubb, the tailor, and, floating above them, bright stuffs, prints, and ribbons, all labelled at the most astonishing prices. I used to think that the kerseys and the ribbons (so opposite in themselves) symbolised Jubb's liberal range of mind. They showed how he could blend the useful with the ornamental, and proved that while he challenged our respect in his sterner character as tailor, he could relax into the amenities of life in his blander vocation of haberdasher. Nearly opposite Jubb's was the shop of Sparkes, bookseller and printer. It was in his window that you beheld that engraving of the massive square-towered church, which was executed after the chancel and the southern porch had been partially rebuilt. The commission for an original drawing of the church had, in the first instance, been offered to Roxby; but, although he wanted money, the poor fellow was just then in such request at Olympus, that our townfolk selected an artist from a more adjacent though less classic locality. The engraving was patronised by, and dedicated to, Lady Naseby of Naseby Hall, a countess in her own right, who, from her proximity to Winborough, made it positively redolent of her influence. Sparkes had himself dedicated to her his *Archæological Survey of Winborough*, from the period of the Romans to the (then) present time. The poem entitled *Naseby Hall*, was generally attributed to his pen; and although not directly proved, the rumour gained countenance from a sudden lowness of voice and a premature assumption of spectacles, by which Sparkes was supposed to imitate the studious and abstract bias of the poetic temperament. He conformed, nevertheless, to the innocent gaieties of life. The respective programmes of the annual regatta, the theatre, and the ball at the Assembly Rooms—all under the patronage of Lady Naseby—issued from the same

press that gave the *Archæological Survey* and accompanying poem to an admiring public. A little further to the left was the saloon of Perkins, the hairdresser, who had occasionally been summoned to the hall, and whose demeanour was, in consequence, as mysterious as that of Sparkes, and incomparably more haughty. Whatever qualities Perkins had derived from intercourse with the great, affability was certainly not amongst them. He would bring the tips of his fingers in contact with plebeian locks with a reluctance that painfully suggested the difference between them and those aristocratic curls with which he was sometimes occupied. He would stand at his door on market-days, frowning on the London coach as it wedged through the crowd, evidently indignant that democratic passengers could enter a town so near to Naseby Hall, on the simple condition of paying their fares.

I am talking of nearly twenty years ago; but let me speak of the time for awhile as if present. That stout, round-faced, spencered little man, for whom every one makes way, is Mr. Latham, our banker, the great man of Winborough. He is awful, not solely on account of his wealth, but because his only child, Miss Amelia, is Lady Naseby's god-daughter. His manner is somewhat off-hand, but he has a kind heart, gives himself no airs; and, being a person of real importance, is indifferent about showing it. He dives from the market-place into a little flagged court. He enters the shop of Mrs. Lamb the pastry-cook; where I buy the maccaroons for Cyril, and where my feelings are often severely tried by ravishing odours of pâtés and soups. The banker is probably going to give a dinner party. A tall gentleman of melancholy visage has seen him enter, and recognises him through the window with vivid interest. At some movement of Mr. Latham—who is perhaps pantomimically declining goose pie—Mr. Myers shakes his head with pensive deprecation. He doubtless expects to be invited. Such an attention would be only humane to a man of his keen sensibilities. He is the editor of the *Winborough Guardian*. He lets you understand that he might aspire to far higher distinctions in the metropolis—but there is a spell upon him. He is the victim of a hidden—but I must not tell. Enough, that if London have wealth and honours, there is no Naseby there. For the rest, he is a barrister, sometimes holds an assize brief, and has been known to puzzle juries by a bird-like trill in his voice, which he has copied from the countess.

The flagged court conducts you to the winding and bustling High Street. There, with its vaulted roof and massive window stands the Old Hall, our Exeter Hall, our exhibition room, our exchange, our theatre. Mr. Alfred St. Leon de l'Orme—the respected manager of our circuit—will perform there to-night, and do honour to his illustrious name by his

delineation of Hamlet. A few doors beyond is the cheerful Naseby Arms. Look down its yard! What a vista of buff-coated farmers, dotted with scarlet-coated huntsmen; of hacks, thorough-breds, and sibilating ostlers! What ringing of bells as you look in at the door; what hams, turkeys, and pheasants, suspended in the passage; what cherry-ribbed chambermaids tripping down the stairs! I grieve to pass by the gay toy-shop, but having spent my money, I had better pass and not look, than look and not enter. I shall turn down a narrow street by that gloomy corner-shop, above which the name Nettle-ship, and the titles of the goods which he vends, are scarcely legible for age. That is the shop of our head grocer and wine merchant. No muscatels, currants, or drums of figs tempt you in his windows. A solitary cone of sugar in blue paper or the figure of a mandarin peers over his wire blinds. Yet there alone can you obtain from dark hollows under counters, or from lamp-lit vaults, your cayenne, conserves of quince, preserved ginger, Midland Hunt sauce, travelled madeira, and tawny port. White in the High Street, Tibbetts in the Market-place, and other novi homines, may resort to placards and display, but Nettleship knows better what becomes his dignity and that of Pollux Lane. For in that lane dwell the vicar, the banker, the principal attorney, the head surgeon, and, above all, Mrs. Colonel Massingham, whom the Talbots from the Grange used regularly to visit, and at whose door Lady Naseby's carriage has been known to stand thrice in a twelvemonth. And in Pollux Lane—I hope I write it with humble thankfulness rather than with elation—was situated our house.

We liked it all the better for that prosaic outside which it wore as a mask to its romance. On one side of the hall you entered a large oak-panelled room, with a high carved mantel-piece, and an ample hearth—the spot on which young Captain Farr, mad with jealous rage, fell slain by his own hand, at the feet of Alice Joddrell, a coquette who rejoiced in powder and patches. Her father, Sir Richard Joddrell, Knight, was mayor of Winborough in Queen Anne's time. Often at twilight, in that panelled room, have I fancied shapes issuing from the distant corner, and sitting over the faint gold bar which the oil lamp in the street cast upon the shadowed floor, until Miss Joddrell's pliant form seemed again to fill the arm-chair—her careless head averted from the tall dark figure that bowed moodily over the mantel-piece. On the other side of the hall ran one of the quaintest and snuggest of rooms—my father's library. To leave the panelled room with its dying embers on a winter's night, and then to enter the warm, bright little library, was very much like closing a volume of Mrs. Radcliffe and taking up Charles Lamb.

There was just space in this room for our

family circle and a privileged friend, generally Roxby the artist. His enthusiastic temperament, his sparkling but restless eye, and his fixed belief that some great potentate or peer would one day discover and proclaim his genius, made him quite a figure of romance in an every-day group. We were all to have whatever our hearts could wish for when Roxby became acknowledged as a heroic painter—a personage whose influence he considered fully equal to that of a prime minister or a commander-in-chief. Our drawing-room was up-stairs to the rear of the house. It commanded the garden with its pleasant grass-plot and sun-dial, its curving paths, well-arranged flower-beds, and a secluded arcade of limes which belted the grounds and conducted by a flight of steps to a somewhat narrow terrace upon the river.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

THE river was, in my juvenile days, the scene of a celebrated contest between our port and that of H—, with which we had communication by steam. As this contest not only showed the public spirit of our town, but exerted in its results an important influence on our private fortunes, I will relate it in detail.

A couple of steamers, established by our chief capitalists, had plied for years between the two ports. The British Empire and the Albion were not, I confess, of those colossal dimensions which their names suggested. The Ant, the Bee, and other members of the penny fleet on the Thames were Leviathans compared with our packets. The latter, however, sufficed for the thirty or forty passengers who were accustomed to use them. Both vessels as they approached the sea—the Albion in particular—went through a series of gambols scarcely consistent with their nominal supremacy over that element, and not absolutely conducive to the comfort of the travellers. No one, however, thought of upbraiding the steam-boats with these results. They were held to be inevitable, to have their source in the fixed economy of things, and to form, in fact, the only conditions upon which the voyage to H— ever was or ever could be possible. Judge then of the wonder and indignation which filled our town when certain speculators at H— resolved to start rival packets between the two ports.

As we returned no member to parliament, and lacked therefore the natural vent for our antagonism, you may suppose that we did not lose the opportunity which now offered for developing that marked principle in human nature. Our vicar—who risked his neck twice a week with the hounds—launched a memorable philippic from the pulpit against the gamblers in human life who undertook the passage to H— at the rate of eight miles an hour. The new company was everywhere denounced for its avarice and impiety,

and the few amongst us suspected of any alliance with it were peremptorily ostracised. When the rival boat—the Eagle—made her first voyage, we were generally of opinion that some special visitation of Providence would befall her—that her boiler would burst, or, at least, that she would founder on the bar at the river-mouth. So prevailing was this expectation, that I doubt whether any amount of premium would have induced the branch offices in our town to insure the lives of her passengers. In spite, however, of all prognostics, the Eagle had the presumption to arrive, not only safely, but an hour in advance of the British Empire. It is true that this audacity was rebuked by shouts of execration from the populace, and the directors and their dupes had to land under an escort of constables, which they had prudently secured. But still I think the impression gradually deepened—that a vessel which could perform a voyage in four hours must be considered swifter than one which required five for the same purpose, and that superior speed might possibly result in superior custom. To meet this emergency the vicar, who had doubtless specific reasons, for pronouncing eight miles an hour impious, urged the prompt construction of a boat which should ply at the orthodox rate of ten. Our company accordingly built the Mercury, which achieved a complete triumph over the Eagle. Nothing daunted—the opposition set a new vessel upon the stocks. She was to eclipse competition at once and for ever. She was to combine lightness with solidity—power with speed. She was to work with double engines, and her bow was to cleave the water like a blade.

This paragon was duly launched and named the Victory; then towed to London for her fittings. On the day that she was to perform her first passage against the Mercury, public excitement in Winborough was at its climax. As two o'clock (the possible hour of arrival) drew near, both banks of the river and the houses that overlooked it were crowded with spectators. All the wealth, beauty, and fashion of the neighbourhood were assembled on the line of route. The expectant mass at a tournament could hardly have been more varied or more eager than we. The people spoke but in whispers or in that subdued undertone which marks the emotion of suspense. The interest was indeed painful, for our townfolk had little hope as to the result of the day. They thought of the Victory's double engines, and prepared sternly for defeat; nor had they any faith, as before, that Providence would concern itself to frustrate the enemy. At length two boomed slowly from the old church-steeple. The wind which lay towards the river bore to us the lingering echoes which sounded to many like a knell.

From this moment every eye was strained up the winding banks to catch the first

smoke-wreath from the approaching rivals. It was an oppressive thought that, before another hour was pealed from the belfry, their fate would be decided. For my part, I almost wished we could have put back the clock, so thrilling grew the crisis. The crowd hardly breathed. An elderly gentleman, seized with a fit of coughing, was rebuked with a concentrated gaze of sternness, as if he had committed some profane act. A boy, who, spite of the solemn occasion, gave vent to one of those shrill whoops, in which all gamins delight, actually cowered before the clenched fists which on all sides radiated to his face like the spokes of a wheel to its centre. At this juncture a member of the Midland Hunt, whose course had lain up the river, was seen galloping up on the opposite bank. When within ear-shot he drew rein, and shouted from stentorian lungs; "The Victory's at Mallett's Dean, and half-a-mile a-head!" Having said this, he turned to the right and plunged into Lea Thicket.

The oracle had been uttered. The crowd gave a heavy sigh, but it was partly of relief. We had scarcely looked for better news, and it was something that, though beaten, we should not be disgraced. For a few minutes there was a slight hum, which again lapsed into silence. At length a cry broke forth, "There, there by the poplars!" Looking to that curve of the mazy river where groups of those trees stood like sentinels, we saw a trail of fire flash along their clumps. An intervening hill for a moment baffled our view, but almost instantly the red stream rounded the hill-base. Not till then did we see that the flame—flame without smoke—issued from a black funnel, in front of which a tall slender mast stood defined. There was no longer doubt. It was the Victory! On she came with spectral speed—flags streaming from bow, mast, and stern; funnel flaring from her heart of fire. And behind her—rounding the hill with grand emulation, and with billows of ebon smoke blown behind her like hair—dashed the Mercury.

"Half-a-mile behind!" cried one; "not a hundred yards."

"A hundred!—Say fifty," replied another, after an interval.

"That was two minutes since," was the rejoinder; "for see, neighbour, she gains—she gains!"

Yes; for, as we afterwards learned, the Victory's engines were too heavy for her build. In passing our terrace, the Mercury (she had reserved her power for a grand *dénouement*) shot by her antagonist, and from the decks of the former, till then silent, burst forth the air of the Conquering Hero, drowned in the hurrahs that rolled from bank to bank, and in the pealing bells, which on the mere chance of such a result, had been ordered to proclaim it. I can well remember how I clapped my hands in sympathy with honest Roxby, who thought the subject epic

in its interest, and whose sketch of it arrived at the dignity of an engraving. I can still see dear little Cyril leap into the air, waving his tiny fist in congratulation.

I have said that this contest, besides its public importance, issued in momentous results to ourselves. The first of these—I may as well tell it at once, as you would never guess it—was Lady Naseby's first visit to my parents. Our terrace probably commanded a better and more convenient view of the river than any spot near the town. So keen and general was the desire to witness the steam-race, that the Countess herself, it was hinted to my father, might possibly be won to honour him with her presence.

Dr. Woodford's reception of this news, though rather stately, was, it seems, sufficiently courteous. The due formalities were exchanged between the castle and ourselves, and on the eventful morning the Countess actually arrived. Cyril and I had lain awake hours the night before, speculating upon her dress and retinue. We fully expected that she would be preceded by mediæval horsemen with banners and trumpets—that she would wear a coronet and velvet robe, and that her train would be borne by pages in white satin. No doubt it was a momentary disappointment to see a young lady—she seemed young to our unpractised eyes—attired in the simplest fashion of the times.

She was in slight mourning for some distant relative, and her dress—a lavender ground intersected with narrow stripes of black—set off admirably the extreme fairness of her complexion. Our brief regret at her simple attire was soon lost in the undefinable charm of the wearer. Her manner to my father would have convinced you that one of her chief ends in life had been realised in his acquaintance; and her smiling reluctance to sit until my mother consented to take the cushion next her on the estrade, won our hearts at once. She addressed a question to me, at which I stammered and blushed, not from absolute shyness, but because I had fairly forgotten the meaning of her words in their music. She then held out her hand to Cyril, toyed admiringly with his light golden curls, and made him share her hassock, with a foot so captivating in its chausseure of black silk and morocco, that it seemed quite impossible it could ever have trampled upon hearts in the unfeeling way ascribed to it by report. Censorious people might call Lady Naseby a flirt, and say that she cared only for excitement, for archery-meetings, races, and private theatricals. To us this was as libellous as the assertion by the same authorities that she was forty, and that her courtesy to my father arose from motives connected with the approaching election for the shire.

My mother judged very differently from these slanderers when the Countess, on taking leave, hoped that she would think well

enough of the owner of Naseby to trust herself within its walls. She must come to luncheon, the Countess insisted, some early day, and she would of course bring with her the Fair One with the Golden Locks. So, with some slight confusion as to sex, the peeress had designated Cyril. As to Cyril himself, she hoped he had already found that Lady Naseby was not so terrible a person. She assured him that she was not married to any of those naughty giants of whom he had doubtless read. On the contrary—here she gave her hand to my father—she was a very timid person: too timid almost to ask a person of learning and thought like him to waste an hour with her in the beech-groves of Naseby. Still, philosophers were sometimes benevolent, and might not deem the time wasted that conferred pleasure. She would not, therefore, quite despair, &c. &c.

Think of all this said to my poor tabooed father by such a person and in such a presence—for my mother had thought it courteous to Lady Naseby to provide seats for Mrs. Colonel Massingham, the banker, the vicar, and several others known at the Hall;—think of all this, I say, and you may guess why it was so hard for Mrs. Woodford to keep in her tears.

As the Countess glided into her carriage, even my father's look of calm politeness seemed softening into pleasant emotion; but the feeling was arrested midway, and changed into a mournful smile. Better than his wife he knew the game of the world and the value of its counters.

From that hour, however, Doctor Woodford's position in our town was singularly changed. His religious doubts, before branded as presumptuous, were now lamented as unfortunate. Before, he had been a sceptic, now he was an inquirer. The policy had once been to denounce him; but the vicar now observed over his whist, that true Christianity should appeal to the erring by kindness and persuasion, rather than by invective. It was curious, however, that my father alone reaped the benefit of this enlightened view. We had other doubters in the town—men of no great worldly importance—whose difficulties were less tenderly handled. I was perplexed then to know why my father's absence from church should excite only a kind of sentimental interest, while the same habit in Mr. Skipworth the druggist, and Mr. Speers the metaphysical schoolmaster, exposed them to fierce reproaches and loss of patronage. I am afraid I could give the reason now.

Invitations to my parents began to multiply. Their acquaintance was desired by our best families. The impulse of both my father and my mother regarded separately, would have led them to preserve their secluded course of life. But the wife hoped to dispel her husband's pensive reveries by a social stimulus; and he was anxious, on his part, that

she should regain the position from which his opinions had excluded her. To a limited extent, therefore, the proffered civilities were accepted. Amongst other results of this change was an intimacy gradually formed between my mother and the banker's wife. Of five children there now survived to this lady but one—the little Amelia, god-daughter of the countess. There was something in my mother's disposition and manner peculiarly grateful to a mourner's heart, and this quality was the bond between herself and Mrs. Latham. In due time, Amelia was permitted to interchange visits with Cyril and myself, and we became constant playmates. It was soon plain to me that Cyril was the little lady's favourite. He was then nine; she was more than a year his junior. Yet her beauty was even then striking, and Cyril's sense of it sufficiently vivid to account for her preference. Her complexion was of the clearest olive. Her dark eyes had an intense expression of truth and tenderness. Her figure was lithe and graceful, and there was a demure quiet in her manner which seemed to temper the rare susceptibility of her look.

It was not without a pang that I who had hitherto been Cyril's twin companion found myself gradually supplanted. He was never unkind, but I felt that I was no longer a need to him. If I joined in the little dramas which he was so fond of improvising, I was sure to be cast for the parts of the evil magician, or the ogress, or the implacable queen, while Amelia was invariably the enchanted princess, or the beautiful captive, and Cyril the knightly deliverer. He was accustomed to sketch these dramatic characters with his pencil, and I was sometimes keenly pained by the very inferior personal attractions assigned to me. He could not understand why I should be grieved, since he had always a kiss and a smile for me. Yet when he wound his arm around the little stranger, and strolled with her under the limes, I felt somehow as if I had better not walk there, and I could not bear him to say, "Come, Lucy, we will let you!" That we hurt me much.

About this time, Cyril was seized with a fever so prostrating that for days we despaired of his recovery. He was scarcely himself again when our dear mother fell dangerously ill. She had nursed her sick boy with a devoted love which, indeed, he well repaid, and her anxiety had developed very serious symptoms of a latent malady. Yet our prayers and tears seemed to prevail. She was restored to us, though slowly.

I am not sure that this period of my mother's convalescence was not the happiest in my whole childhood. It was such joy to mark the gradual stages of her recovery—first, the pillowed chair in her bed-room; next, the transition to the library; then, to the garden-parlour, with the window partly open to admit the summer air; finally, to the garden and the lime-walk. Nature itself seemed

glad of her recovery. She had left us for her sick room in an ungenial spring. She came back to us in the festival of flowers, with rich, light, warm breezes, and sweet odours. My father's joy, beneath which an inner hope stirred like sap, shed a new influence on our life. We trusted, too, not only that the danger but that the cause of disease had been vanquished. The sudden faintness and the keen spasm had ceased to warn us by how frail a tenure we held our dear one.

One lovely Sunday evening my mother, Cyril, the little Amelia, and myself had been to the evening service at Lea church, a distance of two miles. We had heard from one whose pure life was the comment on his doctrine, those truths which point to the immortal future, and which seem never so affecting as when addressed to the lowly or secluded villager.

How minutely all that belongs to that evening revives for me now—the golden rays that poured through the mellow twilight of the church, glancing on the minister's white head, then slanting abruptly from the pulpit, like a broken sun-spear, bronzing the dusky pews, tipping Cyril's curls, and the purple ribbon of Amelia's hat, and finally flowing across the aisle in a rill of glory. Years after, Cyril's pencil reproduced the scene.

The church-yard comes back to me dotted with the returning villagers—the peasant patriarch with his hale, cheerful look; the village belle for the time serious, nor heedful of the swain, blue-coated and yellow-vested, who with bashful longing, followed her afar. I hear my mother's gentle voice in talk with some rural grand-dame. I see her smile which more than repays the cottage-girl for her offered roses—those roses which, wandering from the near garden, shunned not the domain of death.

With light hearts we trip over the stile into the lane festooned with convolvulus and honeysuckle. Like the bees that part from that flower yet return tempted by its sweetness, we children dart on before my mother, soon to cluster round her again. How young she looks! How blithely she talks! What makes her so happy to-night? Is it the words of solace which she has heard—the luxuriant beauty of the lane, and the purpling glow of the uplands; or is it a sense of that peace which she has watched slowly dawning on my father's mind?

The lane now opens on meadows that skirt the river, and on the bank my father comes to meet us. There was something almost infantile in the wife's reception of her husband. She marked the new welcome smile on his face, and sprang to meet him with outstretched hands. Though the evening was sultry, she walked on rapidly and with a kind of buoyant exultation. It was some time before, at my father's request, her pace slackened. By degrees her quick, cheerful tones subsided into a low, sweet utterance, and

from the few words which reached me, I knew that they were recalling past times, living over again the romance of youth. Discoursing thus, they gained the stone stairs which led from the river to our terrace by a side-gate.

She bent over each of us children as we passed through, and kissed us fondly. She was always tender, but there was an earnestness in her embrace that went direct to our hearts: Cyril's eyes and mine were filled with tears. The sun was setting gloriously; the crimson fire went slowly down behind a screen of woods, while above the mirroring river hung fleecy clouds of gold, as if reluctant to fade. All was still except the hum of the belated bee or the drip of the boatman's oar. My mother sat on a bench beneath the lime-trees, and we were silent. At last my father took her hand:

"There must," said he, "be an Infinite Goodness over the world! Reason, perhaps, may never solve the problem, but our hearts are truer than our thoughts."

She gave him a look of unutterable joy, and pressed her lips upon his hand. He began again to speak, but she threw up her arm with a sharp, quick gesture and a faint cry; then sank gently backward. For a minute we deemed her entranced in some emotion too sacred to be dispelled; but when, after a pause, my father raised her, and gazed into her face, there was no mistaking, even in the deepening shadows, its marble pallor. He bent over what had been his wife. A life pure and blessed as that of the summer eve had vanished with its latest beams.

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

I WILL pass rapidly over the events of some years.

The blow of my mother's sudden death fell with a different result upon each member of her family. To my father, for whom most might have been feared, it came the most gently. I can see now that the very depth of his love became his consolation. Could that love—nourished by the virtues of the lost, yearning for future and eternal reunion, most vital when all visible trace of its object had been swept away—could that love be given but in mockery, or issue from a source less than Divine?

It was on Cyril that the shock at first bore most heavily. He wept convulsively, and for days gave himself up to a silence like despair. But the wistful affection of his playmate Amelia won him in time to utter his grief, and the utterance assuaged it. Again they walked beneath the limes, and now it was the girl's childish arm that clasped and upheld her companion.

For myself, I was at first too much stunned by the wound to realise its severity. The proofs of my loss had to meet me suddenly and repeatedly—as it were, at the sharp

corners of experience—before I was convinced. In the hall still hung my mother's garden bonnet; in her chamber was the volume she had left unclosed. I lay for nights listening to the tick of the hall-clock from my open bed-room, and expecting a gentle step upon the stair, before I knew that it would come no more. But although the worst was brought home to me so gradually, my grief was not the less deep. Though I strove to be a comfort to my father, a secret pining for the love which I had lost grew within me. I longed intensely, constantly—as I now feel, sinfully—to be again with my mother, to sleep and only wake in her arms. This wish to follow her might have wrought its own fulfilment, but for a visit paid us by my maternal uncle. His duties as my mother's trustee had brought him from the south of France, where he resided. There was that in my face and manner which plainly denoted failing health, and at my uncle's entreaties, I was allowed—nay, commanded, for I yielded most reluctantly—to return with him.

Change and time did their healing work for me. I remained in France for three years, that period being broken by a long visit from my father and Cyril. When I came back, Dr. Woodford had removed to London, and my brother was at school. We saw but little of the latter, even during holidays, as he spent part of them with friends at Winborough. At the end of three or four years more, I again went to France—this time to complete my education—and returned to become mistress of my father's house. Cyril was then residing with him in town. Greatly to the delight of Roxby, my brother had shown a marked bias for the career of a painter, and was now a student in the Academy. As for my father, he seemed to have grown younger, so genial and serene was his expression. Cyril, whose health had become established, was now a stripling of more than twenty. I could not but be proud of him—of his face, bright with kindness and intelligence, and of his simple, frank bearing. Then at times he had my mother's old look of placid affection, especially in those moments of reverie to which he had been prone from childhood. Of course we reverted to old friends, especially to the Lathams. Before long I discovered a portrait which Cyril had recently taken of his early playmate Amelia. It represented Miss Latham at eighteen. I recalled easily the face, classically-regular, with its pure tint of olive, the clear earnest eyes, and the old demure look now refined into a sentiment of dignity.

When, in a few weeks' time, Cyril left us for a short visit to Winborough, I was at no loss to guess his chief motive for the journey. During his absence I learned from my father that the lad's intimacy with the Lathams had continued until his depar-

ture for London. My brother, he said, was somewhat reserved upon the subject of Amelia, and had certainly made no formal disclosure of his feelings; but they were tolerably evident, nevertheless. My father had no doubt, too, that the state of affairs was understood by the Lathams, whose cordiality might be regarded as a sanction.

It is by no means my purpose to write a history of myself, but I may touch for a minute upon an interest which—though the main one in my own life—is merely incidental to this narrative. During a Swiss tour with my uncle, I met with my fate—which, let me once for all say, is a most happy one—in Mr. F——, an English barrister, now my husband. The sentiment which woke to life amid the romance of lake and mountains, had in a few months grown hardy enough to brave the dull skies of England and to knock pertinaciously at the door of a prosaic London house. To dismiss figure, Mr. F—— became a guest at our fireside. On the night of Cyril's expected return, he had spoken to me such words as—when the hearer can echo them—make the epoch of life. Mr. F—— had taken his leave, and I was sitting alone, lost in delicious musing, my feet on the fender, when the door opened abruptly and Cyril entered.

His look was so haggard, the voice in which he uttered his brief greeting was so husky, the lips that kissed me formed so mechanically into a channel for the smile that would not flow, that for a moment I doubted his identity. "What has happened, Cyril?" I asked, approaching the chair on which, still in his travelling dress, he sank motionless and silent. He roused himself, and answered evasively, in a tone that vainly affected indifference. Suddenly his manner changed. He inquired earnestly for my father; then spoke at random of household affairs, and became quite voluble on matters of trivial import. He plunged the poker into the fire, remarked that the night was bitter, and again fell into silence.

The springs of my love—replenished it might be by my own great joy—welled towards him. I knelt by his side, wound my arm around him, and reminded him of all the bonds of our childhood. I urged him, for our mother's sake, not to shut up his heart from me. I spoke of the old times when I had trembled for his life, and vowed to make it happy if God would preserve it.

He turned to me with a softened aspect, kissed my forehead, and murmured, "Ah! Lucy, you should have let me go!"

The words were not meant for a complaint. They had escaped him almost unconsciously; but they gave me a new right to plead with him. By the time of my father's return I had won Cyril to tell us all.

The cherished dream of his life—the dream so sacred that he could never shape it into words—had been cruelly dispelled. On his

visit to Winborough he had been received by Amelia with an air of sadness and constraint, and by Mr. Latham with a cold formality at first unaccountable. Tortured by suspense, my brother sought an explanation, when the banker replied that, although wishing always to regard Cyril as a friend, it had become necessary to warn him that no closer relationship could be sanctioned. Mr. Latham added, that he made this statement with pain, but that circumstances rendered it a duty.

"Heartless! heartless!" cried my father, wringing Cyril's hand.

I had never seen Dr. Woodford so roused. His sense of justice was outraged. He knew well that Cyril's love for Amelia, though not directly avowed, had been long known to the Lathams and tacitly encouraged.

"And Amelia herself?" I asked.

Mr. Latham, it appeared, had withstood Cyril's demand to take leave of her. My brother remonstrated, and angry words ensued. Mr. Latham, by some taunt on the young artist's profession, stung his high spirit to retort, and Amelia had by accident entered the room as my brother, with flushed cheek and indignant tones, repelled the affront.

In a hard sarcastic tone the banker thanked Cyril for alleviating the pain of parting by a demeanour which showed that further intercourse would have been undesirable. Amelia, who had witnessed my brother's incensed manner, but not the provocation which caused it, addressed him in language which, though gentle and mournful, conveyed a deep reproach. Reproach from her at such a moment overcame the poor lad altogether, and in order to conceal his feelings he took an abrupt farewell and left the house.

I suffered too much on Cyril's account to be very tolerant to Amelia. "She did not deserve such love!" I exclaimed impetuously.

He rose, took my hand, and said in that low, governed voice that belongs to deepest emotion, "You meant this kindly, Lucy; but do not say it again—do not even think it, as you love me. I have known Amelia too long, too well, to doubt her goodness. The knowledge of it is all that consoles me. I may have been no more to her than a friend—a dear friend; I never may be more; but I can be grateful to her for the past. While trusting in herself, I can even bear to know that she was not destined for me. I can hope and strive. Without that trust I do not think I could."

He then told us that he had written, asking her forgiveness for the angry words which he had uttered to her father, and begging a reply, however brief, to soften the anguish of such a separation. He said no more upon the subject, but for days after when the postman's knock was heard I marked a quick tremor shoot over the fixed calm of his face. It was still more sad to note the listless quiet with which he took up his letters in that further season when hope

deferred had sickened the heart. At length one morning the post brought him the Winborough Guardian. We happened to be alone. After a few minutes' perusal he silently handed me the paper, directing me with his finger to one short paragraph. It told with all the transparent mystery of provincial gossip that "unless rumour were more than ordinarily faithless, an eloquent divine well known at Winborough might shortly be expected to lead to the hymeneal altar the only daughter of Mr. L—, the eminent banker."

I could only utter "Cyril," and cling to his erect steady form, as if I had most needed comfort.

"God bless her!" he said after a pause; his voice was scarcely above a whisper, but clear and firm.

I could not restrain myself. "She has dealt falsely with you!" I cried.

"I think not," he answered; "but were it so, I should still say God bless her—she would then need it more."

Mr. Latham's changed conduct to Cyril seemed now accounted for. We had before learned that Lady Naseby—by this time advanced in life, and lately recovered from severe illness—had passed into a state of hypochondria which she was pleased to term religious conviction. To expiate the sin of a life whose pleasures and graces had been superficial, she had become an ascetic and a bigot. Her contrition, even though sincere, was as merely external as the enjoyments and the charms which she had abjured. On the death of the old vicar she had been influential in the appointment of his successor—a teacher who confounded penance with repentance to her heart's content. What I then surmised was afterwards proved. Lady Naseby, whose will was law to Mr. Latham, had endeavoured to promote a union between the new vicar and her god-daughter Amelia. Cyril had himself found this gentleman a favoured and even an intimate guest at Mr. Latham's table.

My brother went out that day; how he passed it I never knew, but when he returned there was a placidity, almost a cheerfulness, in his manner that told of a struggle undergone and ended. My father and myself abstained from all reference to it. It was only by a certain gentleness, so to speak, in the footfalls of our thoughts that one could have guessed there was a grief to be tended; it was only by the softness of Cyril's look that you could have told that tendance was understood.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

AT that time there was no railway to Winborough, and we were consequently almost entirely cut off from its interests and its news. Cyril's younger friends there either removed or became absorbed in the pursuits of life, and all communications from the old town gradually ceased.

The morning after the events just related found Cyril early in his studio. From that time his labours, interrupted for months, were steadily resumed. It was a deep interest for us, as years went by, to watch the young artist's advance. The first book that he illustrated, his first picture in the exhibition, the first generous criticism that pointed out his ripening genius, were all epochs in our family history. The world now knows his pictures well—those stories of fireside happiness and domestic heroism which have touched and cheered many a spectator.

Not even in his art did Cyril make any conscious allusion to the one memory which I knew had never left him. If in child or maiden I caught glimpses of it, the expression, not the features, revealed them. They were the records of an influence unknown even to himself.

Time rolled by; I was a wife and a mother. In his own circle, whether sharing in my children's games, or surrounded by that true brotherhood of genius who own a new tie in deserved success, Cyril was still the same, equable and genial, though never hilarious.

One May evening—a balmy evening, that almost redeemed the character of the month—he entered our little parlour at Kensington. My husband was at the time reading aloud a notice of Cyril's new picture just exhibited, and then considered his masterpiece. We welcomed him, therefore, with more than usual happiness. He looked happy himself. There was in his face the restful joy of one who had achieved honour bravely to use it nobly—a feeling thus so distinct from vanity or pride, that it consists with the very humblest moments of man's experience.

"My visit might hardly have been so welcome," said Cyril to my husband, "had you foreseen its object. That is nothing less than to rob you of your wife for a week."

He then told us that there had sprung up within him a sudden and peremptory yearning—a thirst, he called it—to see Winborough and the haunts of his childhood once again, and in company with his sister. My kind husband's consent was readily gained. Our preparations were hastily made, and on the afternoon of the following day we were whirling at the rate of thirty miles an hour towards our first home.

It seemed strange to me to desert the old coach-road by which, many years before, I had travelled to London; strange, instead of nooky village inns with buxom, apron-smoothing landladies, to find slate-roofed, naked-looking stations—innovations from which at that time the old territorial families of trees and flowers stood disdainfully aloof. When we approached towns, I sighed in vain for the winding horn and the clatter over the stones, and felt hurt at the usurpation of the railway-bell and whistle.

I would have found every mile-stone leading to dear old Winborough just as I had left it. Cyril, who had seen the place more recently, was prepared for changes, but they pained me extremely.

At the end of our journey—it was then night—I could scarcely set foot in the Naseby Arms omnibus, from a sense that it had injuriously displaced the defunct Monarch coach. I was positively wroth to see the quaint, red-bricked Naseby Arms of yore now fronted with stucco and transformed into an hotel. The chamber-maids of past days had been lively and smiling; the new ladies of the bed-chamber were reserved and mincing. The waiters of old ran about in jackets, and cried “coming!” Their successors, grave in tailed coats and starch, glided before you like ghosts, and, like them, waited until you broke the spell of silence by speaking first. It was not until Cyril and I were seated in a snug room at our little tea-table that my spirits revived. The first thing that did me good was the sight of a venerable urn of obsolete shape and battered sides. Shortly after, the waiter brought us tea-cakes of a kind peculiar to the district, and emitting a scorched, oveny sort of perfume. Had the scent been that of heliotrope, violet, or verberna, it could not so have touched me. That long-lost odour sent me back to the bright wide-ranged grate of the kitchen in Pollux Lane. I am not ashamed to say that I wept, and felt that I was once more at Winborough.

Cyril now told me that while entering the inn he had been recognised by Roxby the artist. I was glad to hear that my brother had asked this old friend to join us. He had gone home—as I surmised, for purposes of the toilet; but they must have been accomplished rapidly, as he presented himself in a few minutes. The dear old man was much altered. His hair was grey, his face ploughed up in anxious lines, and he had contracted a stoop. But for the quick vivacious eye, I might not have known him. Without at first noticing me, he seized Cyril’s hands, worked them as if they had been handles of a pump, and laughed till he cried while speaking of his former pupil’s success. “I knew he had it in him!” he shouted exultingly.

Touching on his own prospects the good man was somewhat subdued. His nature was too buoyant to despond easily; but he hinted that the patron who was, some day, to discover his genius, was rather late in making his appearance. It was not envy, but a dawning knowledge of life as he neared its close, that made him observe to me,—“Perhaps the nobleman who is to find me out might have done so before this; if, like your brother, I had painted modern people instead of Homer’s gods.” Of course, we did our best to cheer our old friend, one of whose pictures Cyril predicted, would soon be exhibited. I thought my brother too

sanguine, but the picture—a far more finished one than I could have expected—was, in due time, seen on the walls of the academy, and found a liberal purchaser.

Our first pilgrimage, next day, was to the resting-place of our beloved mother. We then re-entered the town, delaying by a sort of tacit understanding our visit to the old house.

Jubb’s old shop, in the market-place, was now kept by another proprietor. It gloriied in plate-glass windows, and styled itself “Metropolitan Emporium.” Perkins, the patrician hair-dresser, had vanished, and slept, perchance, among unnoted townsfolk who had never been summoned to the Hall. His son, a young gentleman, whose revolutionary ideas might have hastened the old man’s decline, had joined the business of toy-seller to that of hair-dresser, and dispensed toys and marbles to noisy urchins in those erst silent precincts, where his awful father had once shred their locks. Sparkes, the book-seller, had retired, and his window, under the sway of his successor, was distinguished by numerous denunciating pamphlets from the pen of the new vicar.—The way to the Pit—levelled at poor De l’Orme and his Comedians, and A Snare for the Young, directed against the race-ball, may instance the commodities that were to be had within. As we approached the shop a carriage drove up, and we saw protrude a gouty-looking foot, swathed, rather than clad, in a very ample velvet slipper. The tenant of the carriage got out with difficulty, though aided by her servant. She dropped a gold-headed stick on which she leaned. Cyril stooped and gave it to her. The lady steadied herself, and a gleam of gracious feeling softened her sharp, sad face. By that sign only could we have recognised the once brilliant Countess of Naseby.

We passed into the High Street, and were nearing Pollux Lane. I felt the arm on which I leaned tighten, nor was I surprised when Cyril said that he had letters to post, and begged me to precede him, by a few minutes, to the old house. I knew that the subdued emotions of life were surging on his firmness, and that he waited for the tide to ebb.

We took different ways. In a minute or two I reached the lane. The corner shop, still a grocer’s, was new, so dazzling that the reticent Nettleship would have scorned to own it. Glass jars with crystallised candies refracted the sunlight. Confections of fruit lay temptingly in half-opened boxes, on the lids of which the peasants of all Europe, stimulated, no doubt, by their propinquity to such dainties, were performing their national dances. I might not have known where I was, but for the measured thump of the steam-engine, which worked a mill on the opposite bank of the river. The sound, so familiar to my childhood, startled

me. Since I first heard it how many hearts have throbbled with love, grief, ambition, and then ceased to throb! What changes since then had befallen empires as well as households! Firesides had been desolated—thrones overturned; but that dull mechanical pulse beat on the same. No matter, I thought, it is because man is a spirit and lives, that his forms wear out.

I was now fairly in the lane—that lane where, as a girl, I had so often tripped on, hand-in-hand, with my mother. I looked up the archway, close by the surgeon's; the groom was busy—as of old—polishing harness. Then I saw a tall, dignified, Queen Anne sort of house, picked out with stone and guarded with palisades. It was the Lathams'. The door was open, and a lazy-looking footman was taking a parcel from a shop-boy. I saw within a lamp, like that beneath whose cheerful beam I had stood in the nights of long-ago Christmas parties. I noted the very steps which the boy Cyril would have kissed for love of the light feet that passed over them.

Then with a thrill, swifter than sight I looked down the street on the opposite side; yes, there it stood, the quaint, straggling, dear old house! We had already learned that it was to let. A middle-aged woman who stood at the window saw me approach, and quickly admitted me. I made her understand gently that I wished to explore the apartments alone. Then I went into the old panelled-room, and into the little library—neither of them much altered save for being unfurnished. I went up-stairs into my former bed-chamber, then into my mother's, then into the drawing-room, and looked out upon the grass-plot, the lime-walk, and the river. Finally, I bent my way to the garden, longing to muse beneath the shadows of the green, transparent leaves.

But I was disappointed of solitude. Turning into the walk I saw before me, a lady, simply but elegantly dressed, and engaged in binding up a straggling creeper. She performed this task with a care and gentleness that went to my heart, for every leaf-fibre in the old place was dear to me, and I felt as if, instead of a plant, she had bound up a memory.

She moved on with a slow easy grace, now and then delaying to root out some overgrown weed, or to free some entangled rose which peered up helplessly amid the tall grasses between the limes. But that I knew the house was to let I should have supposed her at home. At length a thorn-tree, that lay half levelled, barred her path. Raising her arm to set aside the intruder she stood in a more open spot. The mazy light glided down her dress and made a bright island at her feet. As she turned her face suddenly, it met me like a revelation. Though years had past since I saw the girl of eighteen in Cyril's sketch, and though she now wore a subdued veiled kind of expression,

I did not, for a moment, mistake Amelia Latham.

Did I see her again with resentment or with yearning? Perhaps with a mixture of both. Could she feel pleasure in a scene that must recal the hopes she had destroyed? If not, what brought her there? It flashed upon me that Cyril would join me almost instantly. What was to be done?

I advanced towards her. It was clear, from her face, that she had no recollection of me. I inquired, if the house had been to let long.

"About a year," she replied.

I said, in a careless manner, that the place was prettily situated, but forlorn and ill-kept—capable, indeed, of great improvement.

"Tastes vary so much," she answered, adjusting her shawl.

"These old limes," I pursued, "interrupt the view. They ought to be felled."

She favoured me with a look almost haughty in its coldness. She could only repeat that tastes varied. The future tenant would of course indulge his own.

Then she would not like, I thought, to see the dear old trees cut down.

She bent her head slightly, as if to leave me; but I said, quickly, "The place has some interest for me. It once belonged to a family that I knew."

"Indeed!"

"To the Woodfords."

There was a moment's silence. Then she answered steadily, "The Woodfords were also friends of my own. Have you seen them lately?"

"Very lately," I said, preserving my forced incognita. I could not have avowed myself without giving way.

It was she who spoke next. She inquired after my father, then after Lucy (myself), who, she was pleased to say, had been kind to her as a child. "Perhaps," she added, "they may remember me, Amelia Latham."

Still Amelia Latham, then! In a softened tone I said, "Lucy will be obliged to you. But you have not asked after her brother."

"What, the artist?" she replied, busying herself with a lilac bush.

"Yes, the distinguished artist. His very first picture, *News from the Colony*, brought him into notice."

"You mean, *The Leave-taking*," she observed, "that was his first picture."

Her memory was better than his sister's.

"His last picture has been much liked, Miss Latham, the one called—" I paused wilfully, and tapped my forehead.

The lilac bush shook as a low murmuring voice answered from it, "*Old Times*."

She was right again.

In a minute she looked up calmly, and walked by my side. "Tell me more," she said, "of Cyril Woodford. He is well?"

"Yes."

"And happy?"

"No great life is an unbroken calm; but he seems content."

"And is he still—?"

"Unmarried?" One woman can of course guess another's question. "Yes, still unmarried. He has never forgotten some youthful ideal, who, from all that I have heard, little deserved such preference. It comes from the romance of the artist's temperament, I suppose, that, spite of proof, he clings to his illusion still."

She linked her arm into mine, and there was a pause. At last she said, "Women must judge women gently."

"True; but in this case," I urged, "where they had been boy and girl together, played the same games, shared the same innocent joys and griefs, the wrong was no common one. To renounce for interest the affection that had dawned so early, was a treason not only to love but to childhood. Well, such wrongs carry their own retribution. The woman's heart must either harden into worldliness, or, if not, how must she feel as she recalls the past—stands, perhaps, in the old spot, views the old scenes, hears in fancy the accents of love and trust which, except in fancy, she can hear no more,—knows that she has embittered for ever one noble life, and that a gulf divides her from all that was purest in her own!"

I spoke with passionate earnestness. We had left the walk. There was no shrub or flower to tend now; but she bent over the moss-grown dial by the grass-plot, and traced its circle with her finger. "You are severe," she said. Then I saw slow heavy tears fall upon the dial.

"I have pained you?"

She looked at me frankly. "Not by your censure. I was touched to think that—that he could still trust her."

She said this so falteringly that I could bear no more. "Forgive me," I cried, "I meant not to be cruel; but for his sake I was forced to learn all. Amelia, is there hope for him? I am Lucy, his sister!"

She threw herself on my bosom, and we wept together. Then fondly, wonderingly, as if she were half-sister, half-child—some Perdita recovered from the elements—I kissed her repeatedly, and, her dear head leaning on my arm, guided her again into the walk. I asked her no question. I did not need. Who could doubt those eyes and that pressure of the hand?

When we wound back through the alley, I saw a tall figure slowly descending the garden-steps.

"Amy," I whispered, "there is some one coming—my companion in this journey, can you meet him?"

She looked at me keenly, then down the path, and gave me an assuring grasp. I walked before her, and met my brother advancing.

"Cyril," I cried, "prepare yourself! Here is a friend—a dear friend!" Before I could say Amelia Latham, he had read it in my face. A feeling leaped to his own so intense, that it might either have been bliss or anguish. But O! the calm that succeeded, the soft transfiguring smile in which more than the lustre of his youth re-dawned. She had followed me with extended hands. He took them without a word, and led her on.

I knew my part well enough to linger behind. Their silence was soon broken. Then Cyril learned how his letters to Amelia, and hers to him—though she was long ignorant that he had written—had been intercepted by her father; how the report of her betrothal to the vicar had arisen from his frequent visits at Mr. Latham's, and from the known wishes of the latter for a match which Amelia had always resisted; how Mr. Latham himself, before his death, had revealed to her, with deep penitence, the stratagem which had wrecked her hopes. She, too, had been faithful to the memory of childhood. In a few days my father was summoned to Winborough. We were four—all members of one family—when we left the town; and Cyril's sister felt, but felt happily, that she had resigned to its lawful claimant a woman's chief place in his heart.

DRIP, DRIP, O RAIN!

DRIP, drip, O Rain!

From the sky's beclouded eaves;
Wail, wail, O Wind,
That sweepest the wither'd leaves.

Moan, moan, O Sea!

In the depths of thy secret caves;
Utter thine agony,
With the roar of thy striving waves!

Sigh, sigh, O Heart!

That vainly seekest rest;
Moan, moan, O Heart!
By grief and care oppress.

For the drip of the falling rain
And the wail of the wind shall cease;
The roar and strife of the waves
Ere long shall be at peace.

Then fear not, O sad Heart!
To let thy grief have way;
For the grief that hideth not
Shall the sooner pass away.

THE NEW JERUSALEM.

EVERYBODY has heard of Swedenborg and the Swedenborgians; but few know that the New Jerusalem Church (as this sect call themselves) although based on revelations, claiming to be divine, almost as improbable as those of Mahomet himself, is now, at the end of a hundred years, growing and spreading not only among ourselves and in our colonies, but in many parts of Europe and

America; and that numbers of intelligent and even learned men are found among its votaries.

Emanuel Swedenborg was no vulgar fanatic. He was distinguished by his social position, his eminence in science and literature, his active pursuits as a man of the world, and his high personal character during his whole life. He was the son of a Lutheran bishop, and was born at Stockholm in sixteen hundred and eighty-eight. He distinguished himself in the physical sciences and the practical arts connected with them; and his various works in mathematics, chemistry, and physiology, hold a high place in the literature of the day. He received honours from the principal scientific bodies of Europe, and was appointed by Charles XII. Inspector-General of the Mines, as a reward for important services rendered by him to the king. The royal favour was continued to him by Charles's successor, Queen Ulrica, by whom he was ennobled, with the title of baron. Such was his life till three-score and ten, when he suddenly renounced the world, resigned his public offices, and began to proclaim his celestial mission, which, according to his own account, he had received some years before. In the preface to one of his mystical treatises (*De Cœlo et Inferno*) he says: I was dining very late at my lodgings in London—(this was in seventeen hundred and forty-three)—and was eating heartily. When I was finishing my meal I saw a sort of mist around me, and the floor covered with hideous reptiles. They disappeared: the mist cleared up; and I saw plainly, in the midst of a vivid light, a man sitting in the corner of the room, who said with a terrible voice, Don't eat so much. Darkness again gathered around me—it was dissipated by degrees, and I found myself alone. The following night the same man, radiant with light, appeared to me and said: I, the Lord, the Creator and the Redeemer, have chosen thee to explain to mankind the inward and spiritual sense of the Holy Scriptures, and I shall dictate what thou art to write. That night the eyes of my inner man were opened, and enabled to look into heaven, the world of spirits, and hell; and there I saw many persons of my acquaintance, some dead long before, and others recently. He spent the latter years of his life in publishing, in quick succession, a multitude of works, reporting his conversations with God, angels, and spirits of the dead, and describing visits, not only to the planets of our solar system, but to the fixed stars in the remotest regions of the universe. He always speaks as an eye or an ear witness: Such is what the Lord hath revealed to me: Such is what the angels have told me. He relates with minuteness his dialogues and disputations with the beings of other worlds; describes their personal appearance, habits, and manners, in a familiar and matter-of-fact way, which reminds us of

the writings of Defoe; and uses the same style in describing the things he saw and heard among angels and spirits, and even in the presence of God himself. All these revelations are given as the proofs and illustrations of the mystical doctrines which he is commissioned to teach, and he claims for them all the authority due to immediate communications from heaven. His visions, and the mystical system founded upon them, excited curiosity, heightened by the eminence of his name. They began to act upon the imagination and command the belief of many educated people—for his books were written in Latin; till the Swedish clergy took the alarm, and obtained from the government a commission to inquire into his heresies. Nothing, however, came of the inquiry, and Swedenborg was allowed to go on in his own way without molestation. He lived very quietly in a small house in Stockholm, where he had many visitors drawn by his writings from other countries as well as his own. In his reception of them he exhibited a good deal of the charlatan. His chamber was hung with mystical pictures; and, when a stranger, after waiting a due time, was admitted, the sage was discovered in profound meditation, or, unconscious of mortal presence, engaged in colloquy sublime with some invisible visitant from the world of spirits. His life, however, is admitted on all hands, to have been irreproachable; his habits were simple; and, being in easy circumstances, he does not seem ever to have turned his divine mission to any worldly account. He died in England of apoplexy in seventeen hundred and seventy-two, at the age of eighty-five, and his remains rest in the Swedish church in Ratcliffe Highway.

The Swedenborgian revelations, and the strange creed founded upon them, have by no means been a passing delusion. Though Swedenborg's followers have not made a great noise in the world, yet, they appear to have been gradually increasing in numbers from the time of his death down to our own day. His theological tenets, though at variance with the fundamental principles of Christianity, were adopted in this country by professed Christians and even by clergymen of the Church of England. In the year 1770, the Reverend T. Hartley, rector of Winwick, translated several of his works, particularly one of the wildest of them all, the treatise on Heaven and Hell, from which we have already quoted his account of the way in which he received his divine mission from the lips of God himself. It is said that above fifty English clergymen became early converts to his faith. Among its most zealous votaries was the Rev. Mr. Clowes, rector of St. John's, Manchester, who, nevertheless, remained in communion with the church and held his benefice till his death in 1831. This anomaly seems to have arisen from the circumstance, that Swedenborg did not reject

the authority of the scriptures. On the contrary, he made them the foundation of his doctrines, expounding them in the spiritual sense revealed to him, for the first time, by direct communication with the world of spirits. The Swedenborgians still call themselves Christians, though none of them, we believe, now hold communion with any Christian sect. They are united under the denomination of the New Jerusalem Church—a body, which, in Great Britain alone has several thousand members. They have places of worship in London and most of the principal towns. Their church has a regular constitution, holds annual conferences in the metropolis, and has its own liturgy and ritual modelled on the forms of the Church of England.

The Swedenborgian books form a library by no means inconsiderable. More than forty years ago a society was formed in London for the purpose of publishing and circulating the writings of Swedenborg. This society, which still exists, has been active in its vocation; and the translations of these works, with the dissertations and commentaries of the English editors, evince learning and literary ability. From these voluminous writings we have picked a few passages in which Swedenborg describes his intercourse with spiritual beings and the inhabitants of the other worlds.

It is observable that wherever he wanders, though it be into the remotest regions of the universe,—with whomsoever he holds converse, though it be with the Supreme Being himself, with his angels, or with the illustrious dead of every age and every nation—all is very commonplace, and nothing is removed an iota above the level of our ordinary earthly existence.

One of his books—a goodly volume published by the society aforesaid—is entitled, “On the Earths in our Solar System which are called Planets, and on the Earths in the Starry Heavens; with an account of their Inhabitants, and also of the Spirits and Angels there; from what has been heard and seen.” This will afford several extracts.

Swedenborg visits the planet Mercury,—“I was desirous to know what kind of face and body the men in the earth Mercury had, whether they were like the men on our earth. Instantly there was presented before my eyes a woman exactly resembling the women in that earth. She had a beautiful face, but it was smaller than that of a woman of our earth; her body was more slender, but her height was equal. She wore on her head a linen cap, which was put on without art, but yet in a becoming manner. A man also was presented to view, who was more slender in body than the men of our earth are. He was clad in a garment of a dark blue colour, closely fitted to his body,” and so forth. He also saw oxen, horses, sheep, &c. Notwithstanding the nearness to the sun the tem-

perature was moderate; a phenomenon for which supposable scientific reasons are assigned.

Then he went to Jupiter. But he did not (like Voltaire in his *Micromegas*) find that the inhabitants of that immense planet were giants. He tells us that the inhabitants of Jupiter “are distinguished into nations, families, and houses, and that no one covets another’s property. When I would have told them that on this earth there are wars, depredations, and murders, they instantly turned away from me and expressed aversion.” Here we are reminded of Gulliver’s journey to Brobdingnag. When Gulliver has given the king of that country his bitterly satirical description of Europe, his majesty replies, “Your natives must be the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the face of the earth.” The people of Jupiter, we are further told, “do not walk erect, nor creep on all fours, but, as they go along, they assist themselves with their hands, and alternately half elevate themselves on their feet, and also at every third step turn the face sideways and behind them, and at the same time bend the body a little, for it is thought indecent to be seen in any other point of view than with the face in front.” These good people, moreover, sit cross-legged. They who live in warm climates go naked, but all are perfectly chaste. When they lie in bed they turn their faces forward, but not towards the wall, “because they believe that in turning the face forward they turn it to the Lord, but when backward they avert it from the Lord. I have sometimes (adds Swedenborg) when in bed observed in myself such a direction of the face, but I never knew whence it was.”

Such are the manners and customs of the people in the planet Jupiter. Similar descriptions are given of the inhabitants of Venus, Mars, Saturn, and several of the fixed stars. Of Saturn Swedenborg borrows his ideas from known astronomical facts. That planet, he avers, is illuminated at night by light from its satellites and its belt or ring; which last object appears to the inhabitants as something whitish, like snow in the heavens. As to the people, they are very like ourselves, and are clothed with coarse skins or coats, “to,” (oddly enough) “keep out the cold.” In one of the stars the wonderful Seer witnessed a scene like the last judgment. “There was seen an obscure cloud towards the east descending from on high, which, in its descent, appeared by degrees bright and in a human form; and at length this human form appeared in beams of flaming lustre. Thus the Lord presented himself before the spirits with whom I was discoursing. At His presence all the spirits were gathered together from all sides; and when they were come they were separated, the good to the right, the evil to the left, and this in an instant of their own accord; and

the good were left to form a celestial society, but the evil were cast into the hells."

In another star, the people are clad after a curious fashion. "There was a man with his wife. The woman had before her bosom a cloak or covering broad enough to conceal herself behind it, which was so contrived that she could put her arms in it and use it as a garment, and so walk about her business; it might be tucked up as to the lower part, and then it appeared like a stomacher such as are worn by the women of our earth; but the same also served the man for a covering, and he was seen to take it from the woman and apply it to his back, and loosen the lower part which thus flowed down to his feet like a gown; and, clothed in this manner, he walked off." There is another little star, one of the smallest, he says, in the starry heavens, being scarce five hundred German miles in circumference. The sun of that earth, to us like a star, appears there, flaming in size about the fourth part of our sun. In that diminutive world the year is about two hundred days, and the day fifteen hours: yet there were men, women, and children, animals, fields of corn, trees, fruits, flowers, &c., all exactly as we have them here at home.

In this way Emanuel Swedenborg settles conclusively, from his own personal knowledge, the sublime question of the plurality of worlds—a question much mooted of late, and on which doubts have been raised by learned professors and divines, as if it were heterodox to believe that the boundless universe contains any inhabited world save our own. How such a doubt can dwell for a moment on the mind of a human being who looks up to the starry heavens—sees the myriads of shining orbs which surround us—knows that there are myriads and myriads more stretching into the regions of space and growing in countless numbers as the aids of science extend our powers of vision, and considers that among them our little abode is as a single grain among all the sands of the ocean; how we say, such doubts can exist, is to us incomprehensible. We believe, indeed, only from reason and analogy, and remain in the dark as to the mysterious beings who people the regions of space, while the Swedenborgians, infinitely far happier, not only know their existence, but everything about them more exactly and minutely than about the inhabitants of the wilds of Africa or central America.

We do not find it easy to explain Swedenborg's views of "the spiritual world," as we often fail to understand his meaning; but we will endeavour to present a general idea of them. The "spiritual world," he holds, does not exist in space. "Of this," he says, "I was convinced, because I could there see Africans and Indians very near me, though they are so many miles distant here on earth; nay, that I could be made present with the inhabi-

tants of other planets in our system, and also with the inhabitants of planets in other systems revolving round other suns. By virtue of such presence I have conversed with apostles, departed popes, emperors, and kings, with Luther, Melancthon, and Calvin, and others from distant countries." Notwithstanding however the non-existence of space in the spiritual world, everything retains its material aspect. "After death a man is so little changed that he does not know but he is living in the present world; he eats and drinks and enjoys conjugal delights. In the spiritual world there are cities, palaces, houses, books and writings, trades and merchandises, gold, silver, and precious stones; everything as in the natural world, but in an infinitely more perfect state." In as far as we can make out the meaning of this revelation, Swedenborg holds that each material world has a distinct spiritual world connected with it. The spirits belonging to this earth and to each of the other earths, of which the universe consists (for he brings them all under the same general law) are located in some incomprehensible manner (seeing that they do not exist in space) near the earth which they inhabited in the body. When men—that is, the inhabitants of this and all other worlds—die, they are clothed with a substantial body instead of the material body they throw off. And in these substantial bodies they continue to live in a substantial though not a material world, in the same manner (as we have seen) as they did before.

This distinction between two states of bodily existence, the material and the substantial, metaphysically subtle as it seems, is familiar to us all. It appears something natural and instinctive, and has been the foundation of all the beliefs and superstitions of the untutored mind, ever since the world began—the rude notions of the savage as well as the exquisite dream of the poet. It is the belief expressed by Banquo when he gazes on the vanishing witches—

The earth hath bubbles as the water has,
And these are of them.

And so beautifully illustrated by Addison in his tale of Marraton, the Indian chief who penetrates into the world of spirits. "This happy region was peopled with innumerable swarms of spirits, who applied themselves to exercises and diversions according as their fancies led them. Some of them were tossing the figure of a quoit; others were pitching the shadow of a bar; others were breaking the apparition of a horse; and multitudes employing themselves upon ingenious handicrafts with the souls of departed utensils, for that is the name which in the Indian language they give their tools when they are burnt or broken." Marraton sees his wife, whose recent death he is lamenting, standing on the opposite bank of a river. "Her arms were stretched out towards him; floods of tears

ran from her eyes ; her looks, her hands, her voice, called him over to her, and at the same time seemed to tell him that the river was impassable." He plunges, nevertheless, into the stream, and finding it to be nothing but "the phantom of a river," crosses over, and the spirit of his Yaratilda clasps him in her arms. The spiritual world of the rude Indian is exactly the spiritual world of Emanuel Swedenborg.

In the spiritual world of our earth, we are told, the different nations form separate communities as in the material world. The "noble English nation," as Swedenborg pays us the compliment to call us, have a great city, like London, where the good reside ; and another great city, in the north, into which "those who are inwardly wicked enter after death. In the middle of it there is an open communication with hell, by which the inhabitants are absorbed in their turns."

He conversed with many remarkable men, of whose condition in the world of spirits we have some curious revelations. "I have conversed with Melancthon, and questioned him concerning his state ; but he was not willing to make any reply, wherefore I was informed of his lot by others.

"They told me that he is in a fretted stone chamber, and in hell alternately ; and that in his chamber he appears clad in a bear's skin on account of the cold, and that such is the filth there that he does not admit those visitors from the world whom the repute of his name inspires with a desire of seeing him. He still speaks of faith alone, which in the world he was foremost in establishing."

He also spoke with Calvin and Luther. "Calvin was accepted in good society in heaven, because he was honest and made no disturbance. Luther is still in the world of spirits, between heaven and hell, where he sometimes undergoes great sufferings." He conversed with Louis the Fourteenth, who, "while he lived in the world, worshipped the Lord, read the Word, and acknowledged the Pope only as the head of the Church ; in consequence of which he has great dignity in the spiritual world, and governs the best society of the French nation." This interview, Swedenborg adds, with great exactness, "happened in the year 1759, on the 13th day of December, about eight o'clock in the evening." We cannot doubt the accuracy of an incident the date of which is given with such precision : and, in considering the earthly career of the Grand Monarque, we are really glad to hear that he is so well off.

There is a Jews' quarter in the spiritual world. "They live in two cities, to which they are led after death. In these cities converted Jews are appointed over them, who admonish them not to speak disrespectfully of Christ, and punish those who persist in doing so. The streets of their cities are filled with mire up to the ankles, and their houses are full of filth, and so offensive to the smell

that none can approach them. In the spiritual world, as in the natural, they traffic in various articles, especially precious stones, which by unknown ways they procure for themselves from heaven, where precious stones exist in abundance. The reason of their trade in precious stones is, that they read the Word in its original language, and hold the sense of its letter sacred ; and precious stones correspond to the sense of the letter of the Word."

Into the theological tenets of the New Jerusalem Church we are not inclined to enter. They are derived from the Swedenborgian interpretations of the Holy Scriptures, founded on direct revelation. "Once," says Swedenborg, "Mary, the mother of God, passed by, and appeared clothed in white raiment." She gave the author some information which we shall not quote. His ideas of a future state may be gathered from the preceding extracts. All those passages of scripture which are generally supposed to refer to the destruction of the world and the final judgment, must, according to him, be understood to mean the consummation of the Christian Church and the establishment of the New Jerusalem Church ; an event which he affirms was accomplished in the spiritual world in the year 1757.

The extensive and long-continued belief commanded by the revelations and doctrines of Swedenborg is a fact so curious, that it has induced us to present these specimens to the reader, unattended by our comments or our opinions.

CHIP.

AN ELECTION BILL.

A CORRESPONDENT has been good enough to forward to us a copy of the following extraordinary publican's bill. It was sent to Sir Marcus S—, a candidate, by a publican after an election :

to eating 16 frecholders for Sir Marcus			
above stairs at 3s. 3d. a head . . .	2	12	6
to eating eleven more below stairs and			
two clergymen after supper . . .	1	15	0
to six beds in one room and four in			
Father at 2 Guineas for every bed . .	22	15	0
23 horses in the yard all night at 13d.			
every one of them and for a Man			
watching them all night . . .	5	5	0
Breakfast and Tea next day for every			
one of them and as many as they			
brought with them as near as I can			
guess . . .	4	12	0
for Beer and Porter and Punch for the			
first Day and first night I am not			
sure but I think for 3 days and a half			
of the Election as little as I can call			
it and to be very exact is in all or			
thereabouts as near as I can guess . .	79	15	5½
Shaving and dressing and cropping the			
heads off 24 frecholders for Sir			
Marcus at 13d. every one of them			

and cheap enough God Noes . . . 2 5 6
in the name of Tinny Car

BRIAN GARRUTY

There is neither total nor date given to this delicate memorandum of costs and charges.

THE GREAT HOTEL QUESTION.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER THE SECOND.

A GERMAN hotel I take to appear in three distinctive phases. There is, first, the watering-place hotel—let us say, the Gross-Herzog Albert, at Saxe-Roulettenburg.

It is *the* building in the little capital of the Duchy; for the Grand Duke never could raise money enough to finish his freestone palace on the Eselskopf-Platz, and lives chiefly at a shabby little hunting-lodge, in a forest, with turrets like pepper-boxes, and walls like those of a raised pie. Albrecht-Maximilian the nineteenth—whose privy purse it would be emphatically filching trash to steal—derives a large portion of his revenue from the Gross-Herzog; not, perhaps, from the actual hotel department of the establishment, but from certain succursal institutions under the same roof, to wit, the Kursaal; comprising dancing, conversation, and reading saloons; together with two gaily-decorated apartments, which you would take to be the most innocent chambers in the world, but which, nevertheless, lead straight down to—well, to the infernal regions; for there are played the infernal games of the trente-et-quarante and roulette. Brauwer and nephew are the landlords of the hotel, and the lessees of the adjacent inferno; and a very handsome royalty they pay to the nineteenth Albrecht. I know we have some peers of the realm in England who are coal-merchants, and some deans and chapters not above receiving rents for the dens where thieves dwell; but I don't think any member of our royal family has condescended to go snacks in the profits of a gambling-house yet.

The Gross-Herzog needs be a splendid edifice, for it is the resort of the flower of Europe, both aristocratic and financial. About the month of August in every year, the most astonishing symptoms of ill-health begin to manifest themselves in families whose members have more money than they know what to do with, and doctors, with extraordinary unanimity, concur in recommending, as the certain and only cure, the famous baths of Saxe-Roulettenburg. The affection is quite cosmopolitan, being felt simultaneously by blasé Russian nobles in the far north, who forthwith importune the Czar for an exeat to travel, and by nankeen-clad Planters, enervated by a long course of tobacco chewing and gin-cocktails in the recesses of the Old Dominion and South Carolina. No home Chalybeates can approach the medicinal virtues of Saxe-Roulettenburg; so, hither they come, to the great pleasure and profit of Herren Brauwer and nephew, the increase of the grand ducal revenues; and, through

him of course, though indirectly, the greater glory of the Germanic Confederation.

I cannot help alluding to the annual August malady as curious. But the most curious thing of the whole is, that at the selfsame time all the chief rascals in Europe begin to feel ill too. I don't mean the dirty, ragged, penniless rascals; but the well-dressed scoundrels, with travelling carriages and cheque-books. They—who have no right to have any lungs at all, and have certainly no hearts—suddenly grow nervous about their respiratory organs, and they, too, are off to Roulettenburg. Then there is such a getting up—stairs with portmanteaus and carpet-bags in the Gross-Herzog; such a playing of quadrille bands in the Kursaal; such a rattling of rakes and turning of wheels in the gambling-rooms; such laughing, flirting, dancing, dicing, duelling; such a delightful salmagundi of pleasure, and elopement, and love, madness, Rhine-wine, swindling, squandering, lying, cigar-smoking, boar-hunting, landscape-sketching, and suicide, that you might fancy Vanity Fair, as the Pilgrim saw it, come again. Only, Christian does not come that way, and Hopeful has long since given up the place as a bad job.

Looking at it in a purely hotel point of view, the Gross-Herzog leaves little to be desired. There are music-rooms, billiard-rooms, morning parlours, evening saloons. There are two amply-spread tables d'hôte a-day; the first at one o'clock in the afternoon, for the natives, who are early feeders; the second at half-past five, for the foreigners. The fare is abundant and substantial: a little too sour in some instances, perhaps; a little too greasy in others; a little too powerfully smelling altogether. But there are a great many courses; and, as long as you steer clear of the fish, and studiously avoid the pastry (which is cold shot in the guise of dough), and give the sauer-kraut a wide berth, you may fare sumptuously. For the Rhine wines are excellent, the fruits delicious, the meats tender and well-flavoured. You can get even beef. The bedrooms are light and airy; the waiters (though obstinately opposed to washing) are civil and obliging; and the head-waiter, or Herr Oberkellner, is a majestic-looking man, with a ring on his thumb and a watch in his fob; of whom there is a tradition among the servants that he is a born baron, and who is so grave, so erudite in appearance, so metaphysically mysterious, that you would not be at all surprised if he were to turn out some day to be Professor Busschwig of the University of Heligoland, and bring you a thesis on the non-existence of matter instead of your bill.

One feels inclined to go with Mr. Albert Smith to the full tether of his advocacy of German hotels, at least, while the bathing season at the Gross-Herzog lasts. I know no French hotel that can at all compare with it for cheerful elegance. This is the life I lead

there. I have a spacious chamber in an airy corridor, not too high up. The furniture of my room is handsome, but substantial. I have a big bed with an eider-down quilt (they don't give you the regular German doubled feather-bed at the G. H.); there are pictures on the walls, representing subjects full of the sly, obese, rather cruel-humour, which distinguishes the Teutons—schoolmasters discovering boys robbing orchards; old ladies dragging out hussars by the ear from under the kitchen-dresser; trouts and pikes facetiously angling for human sportsmen; elephants sportively overturning their howdahs and playfully kneeling on their drivers. The Germans like these snug little practical jokes. Wherever I go about the hotel, there is music; a brass band on the terrace, a blind clarionet-player at the back of the house; a harp and violin in the court-yard, and half-a-dozen pianofortes in as many private sitting-rooms. A waiter off duty is practising the accordion in a summer-house; and a white-capped cook, whose hour of returning to penal fires is not yet come, is leaning out of a window, gravely whistling a motivo from the first Walpurgis Night. There is music on all sides, from the horn of the omnibus conductor, executing a lively fantasia as the ramshackle old vehicle sets off for the railway-station; from that solemn, pudgy little boy who is sitting on a doorstep and composedly thwacking a tambourine instead of going to school; from the two carpenters who are sawing beams in a half-finished house, and who suddenly knock off work, place their arms round one-another's necks, strike A natural with a tuning-fork, and break out into a "trinklied," singing first and second with admirable correctness; and when the duet is concluded returning to their labour, as if choral carpentry were the most natural thing in the world. Were my tympanum sensitive enough I might hear, I dare say, the stout-ankled, fussy, ruddy, yellow-haired, German maidens singing in chorus as they wash their linen in the little river Knaster; the Lifeguardsmen of his Impecuniosity, the Grand Duke, growling forth bass ballads as they black their jack-boots; nay, even the melancholy-winding cor-de-chasse of his Impecuniosity's chief jäger, as the Grand Ducal hunting-party set forth from the Schloss in the forest to track the wild boar. They say his Impecuniosity makes five hundred a-year by consigning his hams to the English market.

Surely Germany is the Own Home of music. The bells at the horses' collars, the snuff-boxes, the clocks, the children's toys; all play some tune or other. All the people—save the deaf and dumb—sing and whistle; and, as for the birds, I never heard the feathered choristers to so much advantage in any other part of the continent. The hours I have passed in Germany, lying on my back, under a tree, and listening to the birds;—the pounds of tobacco I have smoked

for the sake of the skylarks; the castles I have built in the air; the bottles of Hockheimer I have drunk in the morning because I have heard the nightingale the night before—Are not these all written in the Book of Pleasant Memories—the book clasped, locked, sprucely bound, gilt-edged, that stands side by side in the mind's library, with the great black book of things that should never have been.

Back to the Gross-Herzog: a week there will chase away all your splenetic humours; be they as numerous as an Englishman's in a French vaudeville. I have described my chamber. In the morning I take my walk into the delightful country, and watch the blue smoke of my cigar, curling and eddying in relief against the great black belt of forest in the distance. Then I join the early crowd of promenaders at the Marguërite Fontaine, and wish I were Lavater, or Gall, or Spurzheim, that I might found some arguments upon the wondrous countenances in every variety of grimace that are swallowing the abominable ferruginous water at the hot-springs. Heaven help us! What mountebanks we are! How we catch at the frailest straw of an excuse to be able to indulge in our pet vices. I do believe that if I had a well, and could contrive to keep a constant stock of rusty keys in it, or any other substance that would make the water permanently nasty; if I could afford to build a neat ridotto, casino, kursaal near it, with every appliance for flirting, leg-shaking, and gambling, and hire a quack to write a pamphlet about the medicinal virtues of my spring, I—or you—or Jack Pudding yonder, would have as crowded a gathering, as the Gross-Herzog attracts every year. Yes, and the people will know me to be a humbug, and the pamphlet a lie, and the rusted iron water a blind; but they will come and make my fortune all the same. That fellow who used to sell straws with seditious songs in the good old Sidmouth and Castlereagh times, was a philosopher. Dear me, sell us but one blade of morality, one little ear of pious chickweed, and we will accept a whole stack of wickedness—free gratis. When I see the pure-minded aristocracy gambling for dear life at German spas, under sanitary pretences, I think of the straws and the sedition.

During the rest of my day I behold Palsy, ogling under pink bonnets; barège muslins flirting with scoundrelism in lacquered moustaches; eighty years and eighty thousand pounds in a Bath chair, besieged by a fortune-hunter; your tailor with a valet-de-chambre and a courier; your wife's milliner in ruby velvet; the English peerage punting for half-crowns; blacklegs running on errands for duchesses; ballet-dancers making Russian princes greater slaves than their own serfs; French actresses enjoying more of the revenues of Lord Muffineer's broad acres than would furnish marriage-portions for all his

daughters; French feuilletonistes living at the rate of two thousand a-year, and trying to believe that they have it; English barristers persuading others that the fatigue of the practice (which they never had) has rendered the baths of Saxe-Roulettenburg essential to their health; dissenting dowagers finding the chances of the rouge and the noir superior in excitement to the sermons of the inspired Habakkuk Goosecall of Tiglath-Pileasar chapel—these are the sights and people you see at the Gross-Herzog. You sit opposite to them at the table-d'hôte and their contemplation is more nourishing than the five-and-twenty courses. What a delightful, wicked masquerade it is. What is the Grand Opera with its débardeurs, husars, titis, vivandières, cossacks, Robinson Crusoes, Incroyables and Pierrots, in comparison with this travestie?

One word before leaving the naughty little place. Is the Gross-Herzog comfortable? On my word, I think very few people have ever taken the trouble to ask even themselves that question. There is such a continuous round of amusing folly, gaiety, and excitement; you lose and win so much money; you fall in love (or out of it) so often, that you have really no time to inquire whether the doors and windows are properly fastened; whether the chimneys smoke, or the sheets are well aired. For the same reason, although Herren Brauwer and nephew stick it on very heavily in the bill, no one cares to dispute the items. What does it matter to Captain Flash, who has just won eighteen hundred Napoleons, whether he has been charged two florins for a bottle of Cognac or six? Especially, how does it concern the captain, should he be charged even ten florins for the same, when, after an unlucky night at rouge, in which he has lost all, he has been obliged to borrow Captain Raff's passport and run away to Frankfort, without paying his bill at all? No definite judgment can be passed on the degree of comfort attainable at the Gross-Herzog; for nobody stops there in winter-time. It is believed that Brauwer and nephew go to Paris, where they dine at the Café de Paris, and pass themselves off as Moldo-Wallachian Waywodes. The Kursaal is deserted, the natives break in upon the table-d'hôte, and in revenge for the French cookery of the season, hold Saturnalia of cabbage-soup and suet-puddings; the croupiers practice the flute, and the waiters play at roulette for silbergroschen and button-moulds. My friend Niggerlegge, formerly of the Buffs, who has lived over the tobacconist's shop in the Bodelstrasse at Saxe-Roulettenburg for ten years, and makes three pounds a-week the year round at rouge (the only income, in fact, that the worthy man has to live on), Niggerlegge tells me that, if a chance traveller alights at the Gross-Herzog in the winter-time, the waiters fall upon and em-

brace him, the Life-Guardsmen at the palace present arms to him as he passes; the band serenade him; and the oberkellner lets him have for a florin a-day the gorgeous suite of apartments occupied during the autumn by her Serene Highness the Dowager Duchess Betsy-Jane of Bavaria. It is something to sleep in a Grand Duchess's bed; but then it costs you some six florins a-day in fuel to keep the enormous rooms at anything like a comfortable temperature.

The second class of German hotels are found in the towns, not the watering places. The hotel of Der König von Cockaign may be in the ancient German town of Lieberschweinsgarten. It is on the Dom-Platz—that ancient, gloomy, jagged-paved expanse, hemmed in by tall, frowning, many casemented houses, and dominated by the old cathedral—like a tall carved cabinet in stone, which was built, as the legends tell, by Frederick the Wicked, assisted of course by the devil, and will never be finished till the Lust-Berg—that lofty mound outside the town, cast there one night by Satan in a frolicsome mood—tumbles bodily into the river Schnappsundwasser. The König von Cockaign—who is depicted on a swinging sign in the costume of a landsknecht in complete armour, with a tremendously rubicund nose, and mounted on a white charger like a rampant beer-barrel—is, goodness knows, how many centuries old. Walter Biber, the landlord's father, kept it in the time of the French invasion, when it was sacked by a disorderly squad of republican grenadiers. It looks as if it could stand a stout siege now. Walter Biber's grandfather entertained the Elector of Hanover there, on his way to England, to assume the crown. There, it is said, the great Guelph ate the last bad oyster which was to pass his royal lips in Vaterland. Walter Biber's great grandfather may have lodged Wallenstein in his rambling old inn, and have been threatened by Max Piccolomini with the loss of his ears for bringing him an extortionate bill. Walter Biber keeps the König himself now. He is a villain. He is a fat, scowling, shock-headed old man with a face covered with warts, a cap with a green shade, and a wash-leather waistcoat. He is a widower, and childless. He had a nephew once (all German hotel-keepers have nephews) young Fritz Mängelwurz, his sister's son. This youth offending him, on a disputed question of over-cheating a traveller, he formally renounced and disinherited him, to the extent of refusing him bread, salt, a feather-bed, beer and tobacco, which are the sacramental elements of German hospitality; and, after deprivation of which, nothing can be done. More than this, he complained of him to the senate of the town; and Fritz, being very unpopular with the burghers, and too popular with the burghers' wives, the conscript fathers of Lieberschweinsgarten forthwith picked a German quarrel with him

(which is about equivalent to a Welsh jury finding a man guilty of forgery because he can't drink nine quarts of ale at a sitting), and solemnly banished him the town. Young Fritz—who had a pretty fortune of his own in Marks banco—went to Strasburg; where he plunged into the delirious dissipation of that Alsatian capital, to the extent of spending all his Marks banco among the breweries and the broom-girls. Then he went to play the violin, for a livelihood, in a theatre at Brussels, and then he went to the assistant architect of the cathedral of his native town—whose name I need not mention, your ears being polite. So Walter Biber keeps the König von Cockaign all to himself, and sits in his musty little counting-house, like a son of Arachne—a big, bloated, cruel, morose spider—spinning his webs of rechnungs, or hotel bills, for unoffending travellers day after day.

The house is one big, lumbering, furniture-crowded nest of low-ceilinged parlours and bed-rooms, like cells in an ante-diluvian beehive. The beds surpass in size and clumsiness the English four-posters, on which Mr. Albert Smith pours out so many vials of wrath. As to the furniture, it is so heavy, clumsy, close-packed, impossible to move; that you are compelled to thread a winding labyrinth between chairs, tables, sofas, and cabinets, before you can accomplish the journey to bed. When you do reach that great mausoleum of Morpheus, you are stifled beneath an immense feather-bed, in addition to the one you lie on; when you lay your head on the pillow, surging billows sprayed with feathers rise on either side of you, and engulf you; and there you lie, panting, stewing, seething, frittering into an oleaginous nonentity as Geoffrey Crayon's uncle—that bold dragoon—did in the inn at Antwerp. You don't sleep. I should like to see you try it. First, you are asphyxiated; then, you have incipient apoplexy. Afterwards, you have the night-mare. The König von Cockaign, in his full suit of armour comes and sits on your chest, and scorches you with his red nose. Then Frederick the Wicked brings the dome of the cathedral, and claps it on your head, searing your eyeballs meanwhile with red-hot knitting-needles, Walter Biber sitting at the foot of the bed, all the time, chanting the rechnung of the hideous morrow to you, to the tune of the Dead March in Saul. The rats, the ghosts in white, the vampire bats, the spiders in the bed-curtains, and the ten thousand unbidden, unseen guests in brown great coats, who do not smell of attar of roses, but who feast upon your carcase, and suck your blood, need scarcely be mentioned; they are part of the bill of fare of the König von Cockaign. Confound the King of Cockaigne!

The charges are abominable, the cooking

intolerable, the waiters sleepy and clumsy. There is an odour of stale tobacco smoke in the very bread. The beer is sour and mawkish. There is nothing to read in the coffee-room except a Lieberschweinsgartener Zeitung three weeks old, and printed on paper that we would not wrap a pound of mutton candles in at home. The wine is inferior vinegar, bottled to be a standing libel on the Rhine and the Moselle. There is a hideous old woman with a beard, perpetually peeling carrots under the gateway. She ought to be in one of Gerard Dow's pictures, where she would be at home; but, in the flesh, she is unbearable. There are two-score repetitions of the old women crouching under red umbrellas at the base of the cathedral-wall, with monstrous cabbages, and radishes like yams for sale. If you dispute Walter Biber's hotel-charges, he threatens you with the Polizei-Bureau, and half hints that you are a political refugee recently escaped from Spandau. You have been told that in cases of extortion you can appeal to the burgomaster. The burgomaster is Walter Biber's uncle. Perhaps the senate will pick a German quarrel with you. You make haste to pay the accursed rechnung (after having changed a five-pound note at a Jew banker, who swindles you out of about eleven per cent. for variations of exchange, pestiferates you with garlic, and calls you "my lord") and make haste to escape from Lieberschweinsgarten, with a firm resolve never to visit it again.

Of the third class of German hotels I am not qualified to speak, inasmuch as I have never been in any of them. From Mr. Albert Smith's account of the Drei Mohren—the Three Moors—at Augsburg, it is an hostelry which, however deficient in comfort, must approach perfection in the cellar department. Only listen to the recital of only a few of the wines which are in bottle, of prime quality and in first-rate condition. At the Drei Mohren you can have Schloss Saalecker, Obergeringheimer Walpazheimer-Kirchwein, Drachenfelscher Drachenblut, Liebfraumilch, Cantenac de la Domaine du Prieuré, Grand Larose du Baron Sarget Beethman, Muscat de Rivesaltes, St. Perrey mousseux, Soleras generoso, Canariensekt von Teneriffe, Witte Constantia von Löwenhof, Roode Groote Constantia von Cloote (a terrible Turk of a wine, I should think, this), Erlauer-Magyar Korona-bor, Neczmély, Refosco d'Isola, Aleatico di Ponte a Marino, Est Est Est di Montefiascone (the well-known ecclesiastical neat wine), Falernum Calenum, Calabria di diamante, Lwadia von Heraclia bei Athen, Cypro-Zoopi, Tenedos Leucophrys, and Vinum sanctum Bethlehemitanum! I long for an opportunity to put the promises of the Three Moors to the test.

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WHY?

I AM going to ask a few questions which frequently present themselves to my mind. I am not going to ask them with any expectation of getting an answer, but in the comforting hope that I shall find some thousands of sympathising readers, whose minds are constantly asking similar questions.

Why does a young woman of prepossessing appearance, glossy hair, and neat attire, taken from any station of life and put behind the counter of a Refreshment Room on an English Railroad, conceive the idea that her mission in life is to treat me with scorn? Why does she disdain my plaintive and respectful solicitations for portions of pork-pie or cups of tea? Why does she feed me like a hyæna? What have I done to incur the young lady's displeasure? Is it, that I have come there to be refreshed? It is strange that she should take that ill, because her vocation would be gone if I and my fellow-travellers did not appear before her, suing in humility to be allowed to lay out a little money. Yet I never offered her any other injury. Then, why does she wound my sensitive nature by being so dreadfully cross to me? She has relations, friends, acquaintances, with whom to quarrel. Why does she pick *me* out for her natural enemy?

When a Reviewer or other Writer has crammed himself to choking with some particularly abstruse piece of information, why does he introduce it with the casual remark, that "every schoolboy knows" it? He didn't know it himself last week; why is it indispensable that he should let off this introductory cracker among his readers? We have a vast number of extraordinary fictions in common use, but this fiction of the schoolboy is the most unaccountable to me of all. It supposes the schoolboy to know everything. The schoolboy knows the exact distance, to an inch, from the moon to Uranus. The schoolboy knows every conceivable quotation from the Greek and Latin authors. The schoolboy is up at present, and has been these two years, in the remotest corners of the maps of Russia and Turkey; previously to which display of his geographical accomplishments he had been on the most intimate terms with the whole of the gold regions of

Australia. If there were a run against the monetary system of the country to-morrow, we should find this prodigy of a schoolboy down upon us with the deepest mysteries of banking and the currency. We have nearly got rid of the Irishman who stood by us so long, and did so much public service, by enabling the narrators of facetious anecdotes to introduce them with "As the Irishman said." We have quite got rid of the Frenchman who was for many years in partnership with him. Are we never, on any terms, to get rid of the schoolboy?

If the Court Circular be a sacred institution for the edification of a free people, why is the most abhorred villain always invested, in right of that frightful distinction, with a Court Circular of his own? Why am I always to be told about the ruffian's pleasant manners, his easy ways, his agreeable smile, his affable talk, the profound conviction of his innocence that he blandly wafts into the soft bosoms of guileless lambs of turnkeys, the orthodox air with which he comes and goes, with his Bible and prayer-book in his hand, along the yard, that I fervently hope may have no outlet for him but the gallows? Why am I to be dosed and drenched with these nauseous particulars, in the case of every wretch sufficiently atrocious to become their subject? Why am I supposed never to know all about it beforehand, and never to have been pelted with similar mud in my life? Has not the whole detestable programme been presented to me without variation, fifty times? Am I not familiar with every line of it, from its not being generally known that Sharmer was much respected in the County of Blaukschire, down to the virtuous heat of Bilkins, Sharmer's counsel, when, in his eloquent address, he cautions the jurymen about laying their heads on their pillows, and is moved to pious wrath by the wicked predisposition of human nature to object to the foulest murder that its faculties can imagine? Why, why, why, must I have the Newgate Court Circular over and over again, as if the genuine Court Circular were not enough to make me modestly independent, proud, grateful, and happy?

When I overhear my friend Blackdash inquire of my friend Asterisk whether he knows Sir Giles Scroggins, why does Asterisk

reply, provisionally and with limitation, that he has met him? Asterisk knows as well as I do, that he has no acquaintance with Sir Giles Scroggins; why does he hesitate to say so, point blank? A man may not even know Sir Giles Scroggins by sight, yet be a man for a' that. A man may distinguish himself, without the privy and aid of Sir Giles Scroggins. It is even supposed by some that a man may get to Heaven without being introduced by Sir Giles Scroggins. Then why not come out with the bold declaration, "I really do not know Sir Giles Scroggins, and I have never found that eminent person in the least necessary to my existence?"

When I go to the Play, why must I find everything conventionally done—reference to nature discharged, and reference to stage-usage the polar star of the dramatic art? Why does the baron, or the general, or the venerable steward, or the amiable old farmer, talk about his chee-ilde? He knows of no such thing as a chee-ilde anywhere else; what business has he with a chee-ilde on the boards alone? I never knew an old gentleman to hug himself with his left arm, fall into a comic fit of delirium tremens, and say to his son, "Damme, you dog, will you marry her?" Yet, the moment I see an old gentleman on the stage with a small cape to his coat, I know of course that this will infallibly happen. Now, why should I be under the obligation to be always entertained by this spectacle, however refreshing, and why should I never be surprised?

Why have six hundred men been trying through several generations to fold their arms? The last twenty Parliaments have directed their entire attention to this graceful art. I have heard it frequently declared by individual senators that a certain ex-senator still producible, "folded his arms better than any man in the house." I have seen aspirants inflamed with a lofty ambition, studying through whole sessions the folded arms on the Treasury Bench, and trying to fold their arms according to the patterns there presented. I have known neophytes far more distracted about the folding of their arms than about the enunciation of their political views, or the turning of their periods. The injury inflicted on the nation by Mr. Canning, when he folded his arms and got his portrait taken, is not to be calculated. Every member of Parliament from that hour to the present has been trying to fold his arms. It is a graceful, a refined, a decorative art; but, I doubt if its results will bear comparison with the infinite pains and charges bestowed upon its cultivation.

Why are we so fond of talking about ourselves as "eminently a practical people?" Are we eminently a practical people? In our national works, for example; our public buildings, our public places, our columns, the lines of our new streets, our monstrous statues; do we come so very practically out

of all that? No, to be sure; but we have our railroads, results of private enterprise, and they are great works. Granted. Yet, is it very significant of an eminently practical people that we live under a system which wasted hundreds of thousands of pounds in law and corruption, before an inch of those roads could be made! Is it a striking proof of an eminently practical people having invested their wealth in making them, that in point of money return, in point of public accommodation, in every particular of comfort profit, and management, they are at a heavy discount when compared with the railways on the opposite side of a sea-channel five and twenty miles across, though those were made under all the disadvantages consequent upon, unstable governments and shaken public confidence? Why do we brag so? If an inhabitant of some other sphere were to light upon our earth in the neighbourhood of Norwich, were to take a first-class ticket to London, were to attend an Eastern Counties' Railway meeting in Bishopsgate Street, were to go down from London Bridge to Dover, cross to Calais, travel from Calais to Marseilles, and be furnished with an accurate statement of the railway cost and profit on either side of the water (having compared the ease and comfort for himself), which people would he suppose to be the eminently practical one, I wonder!

Why, on the other hand, do we adopt, as a mere matter of lazy usage, charges against ourselves, that have as little foundation as some of our boasts? We are eminently a money-loving people. Are we? Well, we are bad enough; but, I have heard Money more talked of in a week under the stars and stripes, than in a year under the union-jack. In a two hours' walk in Paris, any day, you shall overhear more scraps of conversation that turn upon Money, Money, Money, Money, than in a whole day's saunter between Temple Bar and the Royal Exchange. I go into the Théâtre Français, after the rising of the curtain; fifty to one the first words I hear from the stage as I settle myself in my seat, are fifty thousand francs; she has a dowry of fifty thousand francs; he has an income of fifty thousand francs; I will bet you fifty thousand francs upon it, my dear Emile; I come from winning at the Bourse, my celestial Diane, fifty thousand francs. I pass into the Boulevard theatres one by one. At the Variétés, I find an old lady who must be conciliated by two opposing nephews, because she has fifty thousand francs per annum. At the Gymnase, I find the English Prime Minister (attended by his faithful servant Tom Bob), in a fearful predicament occasioned by injudicious speculation in millions of francs. At the Porte St. Martin, I find a picturesque person with a murder on his mind, into which he has been betrayed by a pressing necessity for a box containing fifty thousand francs. At the Ambigu, I find everybody

poisoning everybody else for fifty thousand francs. At the Lyrique, I find on the stage a portly old gentleman, a slender young gentleman, and a piquante little woman with sprightly eyebrows, all singing an extremely short song together about fifty thousand francs Lira lara, fifty thousand francs Ting ting! At the Impérial, I find a general with his arm in a bandage, sitting in a magnificent summer-house, relating his autobiography to his niece, and arriving at this point: "It is to this ravishing spot then, my dearest Julie, that I, thy uncle, faithful always to his Emperor, then retired; bringing with me my adorable Georgette, this wounded arm, this cross of glory, the love of France, remembrances ever inextinguishable of the Emperor my master, and fifty thousand francs." At this establishment the sum begins to diminish, and goes on rapidly decreasing until I finish at the Funambules and find Pierrot despoiling a friend of only one hundred francs, to the great satisfaction of the congregated blouses. Again. Will any Englishman undertake to match me that generic French old lady whom I will instantly produce against him, from the private life of any house of five floors in the French capital, and who is a mere gulf for swallowing my money, or any man's money? That generic French old lady who, whether she gives me her daughter to wife, or sits next me in a balcony at a theatre, or opposite to me in a public carriage, or lets me an apartment, or plays me a match at dominoes, or sells me an umbrella, equally absorbs my substance, calculates my resources with a fierce nicety, and is intent upon my ruin? That generic French old lady who is always in black, and always protuberant, and always complimentary, and who always eats up everything that is presented to her—almost eats her knife besides—and who has a supernatural craving after francs which fascinates me, and inclines me to pour out all I have at her feet, saying "Take them and twinkle at me with those hungry eyes no more?" We eminently a money-loving people! Why do we talk such nonsense with this terrible old woman to contradict us?

Why do we take conclusions into our heads for which we have no warrant, and bolt with them like mad horses, until we are brought up by stone walls? Why do we go cheering and shouting after an officer who didn't run away—as though all the rest of our brave officers did run away!—and why do we go plucking hairs out of the tail of the identical charger, and why do we follow up the identical uniform, and why do we stupidly roar ourselves hoarse with acclamation about nothing? Why don't we stop to think? Why don't we say to one another, "What have the identical charger and the identical uniform done for us, and what have they done against us: let us look at the account." How much better this would be than straining our

throats first, and afterwards discovering that there was less than no reason for the same!

Why am I, at any given moment, in tears of triumph and joy, because Buffy and Boodle are at the head of public affairs? I freely declare that I have not the least idea what specific action Buffy and Boodle have ever in the whole course of their existence done, that has been of any appreciable advantage to my beloved country. On the other hand, I no less freely acknowledge that I have seen Buffy and Boodle (with some small appearance of trading in principles), nail their colors to every mast in the political fleet. Yet I swear to everybody—because everybody swears to me—that Buffy and Boodle are the only men for the crisis, and that none of women born, but Buffy and Boodle, could pull us through it. I would quarrel with my son for Buffy and Boodle. I almost believe that in one of my states of excitement I would die for Buffy and Boodle. I expect to be presently subscribing for statues to Buffy and Boodle. Now, I am curious to know why I go on in this way? I am profoundly in earnest; but I want to know Why?

I wonder why I feel a glow of complacency in a court of justice, when I hear the learned judges taking uncommon pains to prevent the prisoner from letting out the truth. If the object of the trial be to discover the truth, perhaps it might be as edifying to hear it, even from the prisoner, as to hear what is unquestionably not the truth from the prisoner's advocate. I wonder why I say, in a flushed and rapturous manner, that it would be "un-English" to examine the prisoner. I suppose that with common fairness it would be next to impossible to confuse him, unless he lied; and if he did lie, I suppose he could hardly be brought to confusion too soon. Why does that word "un-English," always act as a spell upon me, and why do I suffer it to settle any question? Twelve months ago, it was un-English to abstain from throttling our soldiers. Thirty years ago, it was un-English not to hang people up by scores every Monday. Sixty years ago, it was un-English to be sober after dinner. A hundred years ago, it was un-English not to love cock-fighting, prize-fighting, dog-fighting, bull-baiting, and other savageries. Why do I submit to the word as a clincher, without asking myself whether it has any meaning? I don't dispute that I do so, every day of my life; but I want to know why I do so?

On the other hand, why am I meek in regard of really non-English sentiments, if the potent bugbear of that term be not called into play? Here is a magistrate tells me I am one of a nation of drunkards. All Englishmen are drunkards, is the judicial bray. Here is another magistrate propounding from the seat of justice the stupendous nonsense that it is desirable that every person who gives alms in the streets should be fined

for that offence. This to a Christian people, and with the New Testament lying before him—as a sort of dummy, I suppose, to swear witnesses on. Why does my so-easily-frightened nationality not take offence at such things? My hobby shies at shadows; why does it amble so quietly past these advertising-vans of Blockheads seeking notoriety?

Why? I might as well ask, Why I leave off here, when I have a long perspective of Why stretching out before me.

THE GREAT HOTEL QUESTION.

IN THREE CHAPTERS. CHAPTER THE THIRD.

THE Yankees (by whom I mean the pure New Englanders alone) are reckoned to be the most inquisitive race of people upon the face of the habitable globe. They kill you with questions. All Europe has heard,—through the sapient and incomparable Diedrich Knickerbocker, the Herodotus of the Manhattoes—of Anthony van Corlear the trumpeter, who was questioned out of his horse by a cunning man of Pyquag, and sent back to New Amsterdam on a vile calico mare. There is no escaping the interrogations of a Yankee; whether in railway-car, on steamers' hurricane-deck, or in hotel parlour; and this the Honourable Amelia Murray (may she never be kidnapped and sold down South, there to experience the blessings of slavery!) knows full well. There is but one instance on record, I believe, of a Yankee being worsted, in the query line of conversation; and this was the questioning Yankee who persisted in asking the dyspeptic man with the wooden leg how he had lost his missing leg, and after much pressing was told, on a solemn promise that he would ask, no more questions, and under a penalty of dollars uncountable, that it had been bit off; whereupon, in an agony of uncertainty as to who or what had bitten it off, and how—whether it had fallen a victim to the jaws of deadly alligator, or catawampous panther, or fiercely-riled rattlesnake; and, fearing to break his word, or lose his dollars, he was crestfallen and confounded, and, ignominiously sloping, was seen no more in that territory.

But I should like to know what interrogatorial exigence could equal the pertinacity with which—to the extent, even, of three mortal chapters of letter-press—I have been putting the Great Hotel Question, and, not content with seeking information, have volunteered replies myself? Can anyone wish to know anything more about hotels? This is not a blue-book; and yet I feel myself already arrived at question number nine thousand and four; and I have scarcely left the Royal Hotel, Dan, and feel it a duty to travel as far as the Grand Junction Hotel, Beersheba, before I have finished asking questions.

How about Italian hotels? The discursive

mind at once travels to the Seven Taverns, the hostelry at Brundisium, to which Horace travelled; and to that choice resort of the Roman fancy in Pompeii, where Burbo was licensed to sell neat Falernian; where the young patricians were drunk on the premises, and where there was doubtless commodious stabling for gilt-wheeled chariots, and the wild-beast studs of sporting swells of the equestrian family. But, putting a bar of twenty centuries, what have I to say of the Italian hotels of the present day?

There is the great Caravanserai of travelling milords: say in Rome, Milan, or Florence, the Casa Borbonica. This was, in old times, the palazzo of the princely Cinquantapercento family: the last prince of that illustrious house—which has given cardinals to the church, generals to the army, gonfalonieri to the towns, and worthless drones to the social hive for ages—is now a snuffy old reprobate, burrowing in a mean entresol in a dark little street of a Parisian Boulevard. He has sold all his Titians and Guidos to the Jews. The brocanteurs have all his statuary and carved furniture, down to the damascened suit of armour in which his great-grandfather went to the battle of Rustufustiacone, and ran away in, and the inlaid dagger with which his grandmamma slew the monsignore who had written an epigram against her; but he has still his coat of arms, with its seventy-five quarterings; and in the picture-gallery of his once palace, now the *salle-à-manger*, there is yet the picture of his ancestor Hercules, son of Latona, subduing the Nemean lion (*Menditore, fecit*). The Casa Borbonica (the Comte de Chambord sent to engage apartments there once, but didn't come; whence its legitimist name) has been an hotel these thirty years. It has a fine frontage to the river Piccolitto, and is big enough for a barrack or a small-pox hospital. Indeed, the somewhat dilapidated condition of its exterior ornamentation suggests, in no remote degree, the idea of its being pitted with that latter ailment. It has acres, so to speak, of vast, lofty rooms; it has a grand saloon, the ceiling painted in fresco with a copy of Guido's Aurora; it has a marble paved vestibule, with a fountain in the middle; it has a grand staircase of scagliola, on whose steps several members of the Cinquantapercento family have been, in desirable old romantic picturesque keepsake days, done to death by the rapiers and partizans of their friends and relatives; the ground-floor gives on to a terrace, and that again on to a garden in the real Italian style: fountains, straight clipped avenues, fillagree gates, casts from the antique gods and goddesses, and sham ruins; there are vases full of flowers; there are Renaissance doors; there is the suite of rooms in Malachite and gold; there is the suite in blue-fluted satin (the Countess de Demi⁴ mondoff's rooms); and the suite in ivory and black velvet; there are countless bedrooms full

of marble, fresco-painting, and fluted columns; there are, almost everywhere, the elements of grandeur, luxury, and artistic taste.

Gaetano Montepietà is the landlord of the Casa Borbonica. He was a Colonel in the army of Italy, under Beauharnais originally (surely those Italian colonels are only approached, numerically, by the American militia-generals); then he was Lord Scamperland's courier; then he kept the Hôtel des Étrangers in Little Nick Street, Leicester Square, London; and, realising a handsome competency in that cosmopolitan but unsavoury locality, returned to his native land, and invested his savings in the hotel which you see. In the great traveller's book you are at liberty to register your opinions and impressions for and against the comfort, cheapness, and convenience of the Casa Borbonica. Be just, and write with a firm hand that in summer weather the rooms are delightful; that—the smell of decayed melons and warmed up macaroni apart—it is very pleasant to have the run of a vast, gaily-decorated palace amid orange-flowers and bubbling fountains; that the blue sky is glorious through the casements, and the shade of the lofty walls delightful in the noontide to smoke cigars and drink lemonade in; that ice-eating in the garden by moonlight is delicious; that almost every article is really exceedingly cheap (unless, indeed, you are known to be a milord, when you are swindled on the ground that you are accustomed to, and like it) that even if you are notoriously wealthy and and liberal, the rent of the malachite and gold, or of the ivory and black velvet suite, lags far behind the jocundly extortionate price which you have to pay for a first-floor in the Rue de la Paix, or a garret in Pall Mall; that the waiters are civil, obliging, quick-witted, and grateful; and that the cooking, though decidedly oily, and not over neat, is substantial and succulent. But here you must stop. Commendation can go no further. You have been just; now be candid. Put down in burning characters that Gaetano Montepietà is a humbug; a cringing, insolent (when he dares), hypocritical, unvarnished son of a Lombardian keeper of hogs. I will not say that he is a Roman—no; he is not quite so great a scoundrel as that; but the Emperor of Austria has very few more finished humbugs among his Italian subjects. I am aware of you, mio amico Gaetano. I have been up to your little game for a long time. I know how you pop down in my bill lire and soldi for sugar I have never eaten, and wax candles I have never burnt. I know how, when I breakfast out, you slyly mulct me in two breakfasts instead of one, as a warning and a punishment. You are own brother, O Gaetano, to the widow Fizzicatti, who keeps the furnished lodgings in the Strada Smifferrata (she has cousins in Camden Town), who makes me sign a list of furniture, crockery, et cetera, supposed to be in

her abominable chambers, when I take them by the month, and brings me in a bill, long, venomous, and tortuous as a serpent, when I leave, for jugs I have broken and never saw, and tablecloths I have inked and never heard of.

Gaetano and his wax candles: to listen to the honest Mont Blanc chronicler, one would think the candle grievance was exclusively confined to England. Why, the whole Continent cries out against them. You pay but seventy-five cents a-piece for them, to be sure; but you are made to burn or to pay for myriads of them. Bougie, bougie, bougie, —bougie here, bougie there, and bougie everywhere—take your old hotel bills out of your trunk and add up the amount of francs, lire, florins, or carlini, candles have cost you; and you will find that you might have had an exhibition of fireworks all to yourself every autumn, and have been economical. I think continental hotel-keepers and waiters feel a savage pleasure in bringing you fresh wax-candles, as I am certain they do in winter time, in cramming your cupboard with new supplies of logs and faggots. I have often, during a bougie nightmare, fancied a congress of waiters in the corridor, dancing a wild saraband, and singing an atrocious carmagnole till the scene changed to a patent candle factory, and candles and waiters whirled off in a wild sahara waltz into infinite space.

Lift not your pen also from the travellers'-book (stern candour demands it) till you have recorded this,—that there never was an Italian hotel that was clean or sweet-smelling. That those at Venice in particular rejoice in an odour that makes you sick, giddy, and bilious; a smell of which it can with little exaggeration be said, as of some London fogs, that you could cut it with a knife. Set down also, in a firm Roman hand that the rooms are awfully damp, and in cold weather afflicted with distracting, gusty, piercing draughts; and that after every shower of rain, the grand frescoed saloons are pervaded by sundry unwelcome visitants from the gardens—not to say reptiles, of the most hideous coleopteric descriptions; which crawl, and wriggle, and buzz, and fly, and leap, and shake their hundred legs over your clothes and food till you are blind and mad. Tell the truth, and acknowledge that with all the malachite and gold, Aurora frescoes, scagliola staircases, and romantic Cinquantapercento reminiscences, the grand Italian hotel is but a seedy, poverty-stricken, dilapidated, tumble-down, vermin-haunted, quasi-rotten institution after all.

In Rome, there is a special hotel which appears to lie fallow during fifty-one weeks in the year, and suddenly to start up into life, with a teeming crop of guests, in Holy Week. Then, and for the succeeding days of the carnival, the Romans going stark staring mad, invite all the sight-seers of the world who have

money and leisure to cross the Alps to play with them. They make a Guy of the poor old pope; they spoil their clothes with wax-candle droppings in the chapels; they crush each others' toes, ribs, fans, and hats, in their struggles to see the losel pilgrims' feet washed; they scream, and jostle and bribe chamberlains, and run broken-kneed horses in the Corso, and dress themselves up in masquerade costumes, and pelt each other with chalken and plaster of Paris abominations, and tell Christendom that they are celebrating a great religious festival. Now it is that the special hotel becomes manifest. Nobody heard of the Hotel del Matto Forestiere, or of the Madonna di Scarlantina, since last carnival; but now, sallow commissioners rampage about Rome lauding the unrivalled accommodations of these hotels. Whole English families, who have been unable to obtain rooms in the Piazza di Spagna or Del Popolo are hustled almost involuntarily into atrocious Bug-parks in remote quarters of the city. Principi Inglesi find themselves dwelling among the Trasteverini; and travelling archdeacons are pent up in outhouses among mouldy old convents and churches and seminaries, where the Scarlet Lady rides rampant. To be sure, to obtain a bed at all in Holy week is very nearly as dear and difficult as to secure a cardinal's hat. The prices quoted are fabulous. Romantic stories are told of the wonderful substitutes for bedsteads which travellers have been obliged to put up with; of how Sir Newport Pagnell, Bart., and family occupied a detached building formerly the residence of some four-legged, curly-tailed animals of the porcine persuasion, which had been removed to better lodgings; how Captain and Mrs. Gunwale had paid five dollars a day for a cockloft; how one of the three hundred and seventy Prince Galitzins in the peerage of Russia was sojourning in a wood-cellar; and how young Rougebox of the Florentine legation slept two nights in a well, and one on a staircase. The Beppos, Francescos, Luigis, and Tommasos who conduct these special houses of entertainment clear profits, while the excitement lasts, of about six hundred per cent.; but their prosperity is as transitory as that of Cowes landladies in regatta time, or of lodging-house keepers in an assize town when there is a good murder case to be tried. For the rest of the year, nobody hears anything more of the Matto Forestiere or the Scarlantina; and the Beppos and Francescos may, for aught I know, earn a livelihood in sitting as models for the painters, grinding hurdy-gurdies, or goading buffaloes.

Country Italian hotels are not much removed, I fancy, from the likeness of that renowned inn at Terracina, where the Englishman met the fair Venetian, and had afterwards the adventure with the brigand. There are five metropoli: Rome, Florence, Venice, Naples,

and Milan. I will throw in Genoa, to make up the half-dozen; so say (and I give a margin of two digits) twelve good hotels in all. The provincial ones are simply execrable, for the simple reason that they are not patronised by continuous relays of strangers. Who stops, longer than he can help, in a small Italian town? We scamper from capital to capital, charging through galleries and museums in a Cossack fashion, seeing a thousand pictures and statues, remembering, perhaps, a score, and understanding, very often, not one. Some day, very likely, the small towns will be opened up by railways, and we shall have good hotels in them.

I have two additional remarks to make on Italian hotels, and I have done with the boot-shaped peninsula. Imprimis,—about Naples. In that delightful city the hotel-dweller may enjoy a lively but expensive gratification over and above all the pleasures of the sea, the sky, and the table-d'hôte. The gratification (which is not charged for in the bill) consists in being robbed—I don't say by the waiters—I don't say by anybody in particular—but I think by every man, woman and child, who can gain access to your apartment, your pocket, your trunks, or your generous feeling. From the coachman who drives you to your hotel, to the waiter who bows you from it, be assured every mother's son has something about him which belongs not to him, but to you. It matters little what they steal, a pocket-handkerchief or a purse of gold. It matters less who is the thief, the heir apparent, or the lowest Lazzaroni of the Quai Santa Lucia—robbers there must and robbed you must be. I don't know what the Neapolitans will do between their hang-dog government and the threatened extinction of Vesuvius. Honest men won't come under the sway of the glorious, generous king, and sight-seers won't go to see Naples if there be no burning mountain. Fancy three hundred and fifty thousand thieves with nothing to steal! A pitiable case, indeed. They will die of grief; and I did once hear of a waiter at a Neapolitan hotel who was found by an Englishman sitting on the staircase, and weeping bitterly; and, being asked the cause of his sorrow, answered, amid heartrending sobs,—the signor is unjust, the signor is ungenerous, the signor performs not his duty towards men. He looks up all his drawers, and leaves not a rag about, and one cannot steal the value of a carlino from him.

What do I know about Spanish hotels?—nothing. I might, indeed, conjure up an unsubstantial word-picture about omelets, oil, garlic, puchero, funcions, muleteers, gregos, slouched-hats, and swarthy dons laying down their cigarillas to eat their soup, and resuming them while waiting for their olla-podrida. I might fill in a back-ground with Señora Perea Nena dancing, while Señor Alfonso Ruiz plays lithely on the castanets, or with Don Quixote charging the windmill, or Dorothea

taking her eternal footbath in the distance. But this would be but a blurred, unfaithful photography, and worthless. Let us be truthful or we are nothing. The Spanish campaign is yet to come. Nor can I tell you what the hotels in the Tyrol are like (though I have been told those at Ischl are charming); nor can I perorate on the great, bare, ruinous Khans of Asia Minor. When my uncle—Colonel Cutcherry—comes home from Madras I will collate his experience as to the capacities of the Overland Route hotels at Cairo and Alexandria, and you must wait till I have entered the college of the Propaganda, and till I have been sent to China as a missionary, till I am enabled to describe, in the manner of Father Huc, the hotels of the middle kingdom. I must no longer tarry in Europe (though due in an English hotel soon) for my boat is on the shore, and my bark is on the sea; yet, before I go, here's a double health to a continental hotel I have ungenerously passed over. I allude to the Grand Laboureur, and that, for once, in my fantastic roving commission, is its veritable name. I have nothing but what is favourable to say of that sumptuous traveller's joy. Good dinners, clean beds, excellent services, moderate prices,—all are to be found at the Great Labourer, and he his worthy of his hire.

I have been purposely silent on the subject of the hotels of Constantinople, because they are in a transition state, like Turkey itself, at present. It is to be hoped that the mighty influx of military visitors, and the T. G.'s who will be sure to keep on flocking thereto for some years to come, will work wonders of improvement in the hotels of Byzantium. The Old Pera Hotel, kept generally by an equivocal Levantine, or an unmistakable Maltese, was decidedly of the bad-dear, dirty, and uncomfortable.

My boat being on the shore, it is necessary that you should enter it with me in order to reach my bark on the sea; for we have a journey of three thousand five hundred miles to make before we can reach an hotel, without a description of which these papers would be maimed and imperfect. I will trouble you also to disburse a matter of thirty guineas (exclusive of wines and liquors) for a state-room on board the Great Bear of Michigan, mail steamer; furthermore to hurry down to Liverpool by express, get on board the tender, tell your friends to expect you back in about six months, and prepare yourself for a ten days' sojourn on the briny ocean; for you, and I, and her Majesty's mails are all bound, in the spirit, to New York.

The steamer in which you make the easy, rapid passage, is, in truth, and in almost every respect, a great floating hotel in itself. The steam-boat company having had the ingenuity to divine that a sea-voyage, even of ten days' duration, is despairingly tedious,

have come to the conclusion that the best methods of wiling away the time lie in eating, drinking, and smoking; and have most wisely afforded the amplest accommodation for the indulgence of these three pastimes. The passengers add a little gambling by way of rider to the staple amusements. With an excellent library, a spacious promenade, a luxurious table, a snug bed-chamber, and congenial society of both sexes, he must be a misanthrope or a hypochondriac indeed who could find a trip in an Atlantic-steamer tedious. It has not unfrequently occurred to me that, if I had money, I might do much more foolish things than pass a year sailing backwards and forwards between New York and Liverpool; and I can imagine a traveller, inimical to change and fond of sitting down when he finds himself comfortable, as reluctant to quit the steamer at the end of the voyage, as the life-long prisoner was to leave the Bastille. Talk of a ship being a prison with the chance of being drowned. I should like Doctor Johnson to have sat at the sumptuous table of the Great Bear of Michigan on a champagne day. He would have taken wine with Captain Wobble, I warrant.

There has been a rough day or two, and you have been sea-sick in a gentlemanly way, and you have touched at Halifax and Boston and you enter, at last, the incomparable Bay of New York. You see the pilot-boats, the groves of masts, the sunny islands; you are boarded by the news-boys, you hear all the shouting, smell all the cigar-smoke, pass the custom-house, and land. A ragged Irishman immediately reminds you that Donnybrook Fair is immortal; fights a pitched battle with seven other Irishmen raggeder than himself, dances a jig on your luggage, and hustles you into a villainous cab, for which, at your journey's end, he makes you pay very nearly as much as suits his own sweet will, abusing you terrifically if you dispute his fare. Only take one cab in New York, and you will be perfectly convinced of the existence of thorns in a rosebush. He rattles you through broad streets: you catch glimpses of immense buildings of white marble and coloured bricks, of a blue cloudless sky, of slim young ladies dressed in bright colours, of news-boys smoking cigars, of vast storehouses, of innumerable repetitions of the ragged Irishman, of bearded men, of tarry sailors, of ugly churches, of flaunting flags, of tearing fire-engines with red-shirted firemen. You don't know whether you are in Paris, or in Dublin or in Liverpool, or in Wapping, or in America; and you are set down at last at the great New York Hotel—the SAINT BOBLINK HOUSE.

The Saint Boblink House is a mighty edifice of pure white marble. Saint Boblink is much too noble a saint to be canonised in compo. The windows sparkle like gems in a queen's diadem, and seem as numerous as the facets in

a crystal. Wide yawning is the doorway; countless are the columns; lofty and aerial the balconies; vividly verdant the verandahs; and high up above the topmost balustrade floats, self-assertingly in the air, the great banner of the Stars and Stripes. This is an hotel with a vengeance, but run not away with the impression that it is unique—a solitary monster, like the Sphinx, the Grand Hôtel du Louvre, or the Great Western Hotel, Paddington. It has brothers, and cousins, and children as capacious, if not more so, than itself, on either side, and up and down, as far as the eye can reach, in the great transatlantic Boulevard—the Straightway. The St. Boblink House is but one among an army of colossal hotels. The Parvarer House, the St. Hominy House, the Golden Gate House, the Amalgamated Squash Hotel, and other high-sounding hostelries. The St. Boblink is a vast eating and drinking factory; an Eastern caravan-serai opened up by American enterprise; an emperor's palace let out in room lots at three dollars a-day; a Vatican for voyagers.

People say that there are above two thousand rooms in that same Vatican. I shouldn't like to bet; but to guess, from the hordes of travellers that the St. Boblink gives shelter to, it would really seem as though his Holiness the Pope had the smaller house of the two. The ear of man has not heard how many the St. Boblink would accommodate at a pinch; and no one is in a position to dispute the boast of Washington Mush, its landlord, (now travelling in Europe with a secretary, a courier, a tutor, a governess, and two ladies' maids for his family), that he could take the whole of Congress in to board; provide beds, in addition, for the British House of Lords, if they felt inclined to come over and see the workings of the American constitution; and find, without much trouble, shake-downs into the bargain for the House of Commons.

You may have rooms, and suites of rooms, at the Saint Boblink, at a sliding scale of prices. If you are inclined to do the Sardapanalus, you can revel in splendour, and ruin yourself if you like; but if you are but a simple, sensible, single traveller, who has travelled, perhaps, twelve hundred miles with no more luggage than a valise, or a shiny carpet-bag, you may board and lodge, and enjoy your thousandth share of all the luxuries in this hotel-palace for the moderate sum of three dollars, or twelve shillings and sixpence per diem. There are even cheaper, and not much less splendid hotels; but the Saint Boblink is a first chop—an A-one house.

For your three dollars a-day you have the run of all the public apartments, a noble billiard room, where you may win or lose dollar-bills of or to excitable southerners and senators in want of excitement, to your heart's content; reading-rooms, where the ten thou-

sand newspapers of the Union, all printed on the largest possible paper in the smallest possible type, are spread on the green-baize tables; smoking-rooms where you may taste the flavour of real Havannahs, or luxuriate in the mastication of the fragrant pigtail; writing-rooms; audience-rooms; cloak-rooms; lavatories, conversation-parlours, and lounging-balconies. I don't know whether they have fitted up a whittling-room at the Saint Boblink yet; but I dare say that convenience will be added to the establishment on the return of Washington Mush, Esquire, from Europe. At the same time, perhaps, it would be as well to erect an apartment devoted exclusively to the national pastime of expektoration. At present, for want of a special location, the whole palace is one huge spittoon, which is inconvenient to foreigners.

The bar-room of the Saint Boblink may be imitated, but it can never be equalled in Europe. No efforts of plastic art, of upholstering ingenuity, of architectural cunning, of licensed-virtualising cunning could produce such a result as is here apparent. The green velvet spring couches, with carved oak arm-rests, that artfully invite you to lounge; the marble mantel-pieces and stove-tops that seem to say, seductively, "come, raise your heels above the level of your heads, and show the European stranger a row of chevaux de frise of black pants;" the rocking-chairs; the dainty marble and bronze tables (transatlantic reminiscences of Parisian cafés); the arabesqued gas-burners; the cut-glass looking-glasses, gilt frames, and Venetian blinds; the splendidly commercial advertisements that so worthily usurp the place of stupid high art pictures and engravings; for who would not rather see "Fits, fits, fits," in chromolithography, or "Doctor Turnipseed's medicated mangelwurzel," or, "the Patent Heracleidan Detective Padlock," sumptuously framed and glazed, than Sir Edward Landseer's "Deerstalking," or the Queen after Winterhalter? But I do the bar of the Saint Boblink injustice. There are some engravings. The massive head of Daniel Webster frowns upon the sherry-cobler drinkers; proudly (in a print) in the muddy Mississippi, defiant of snags and sawyers, steams along the Peleg Potter steamer, huge, hurricane-decked, many-portholed, high-pressured, and hideous; her engines working in sight, as if her boilers were impatient to burst, and had come up from the engine-room to see how many passengers there were, before bursting. Then there is a grand view of the palace itself—the Saint Boblink, as large as life (at least on the scale of half an inch to a foot), lithographed by Messrs. Saxony and Mayor. The bar-room has almost made me forget the bar itself; though surely one visit to it is sufficient to stamp it in your remembrance for ever. There, on that great marble field of Bacchus are sold the most delicious thirst-

quenchers in the two hemispheres. It is not necessary that I should enumerate them. The names, at least, of egg noggs, juleps, brandy smashes, timber doodles, and stone-fences, are known in Europe; and there are already several buffets in Paris where you can be supplied with the cool and cunning drink known—wherefore I am ignorant—as a Fiscal Agent. The bar-keeper is a scholar and a gentleman, as well as an accomplished artist, captain of a fire company, and, I believe, a man of considerable property, and has unapproachable skill in compounding and arranging these beverages, and making them not only exquisite to the taste but delightful to the view. His drinks are pictures. See that tall tumbler, gracefully proportioned, elegantly chased. See through its pellucid walls the artfully-chiselled blocks of purest ice, the frozen powder at the top, the crisp icicles, spear, arrow, halbert-headed, that cling about the rim like bronze scrolls on *fa buhl* cabinet. See the blessed liquor within, ruddy, golden or orange tawny, dancing in the sunlight, sparkling in the glassy depths, purling through fissures, rippling through the interstices of the ice, and seeking the lowest depths, the remotest caverns, where the seaweed (represented by a sprig of mint) is, and the mermaids dwell. See the summit, crowned by a blushing green-crested strawberry! Do you not feel inclined to sing with the poet:

Hide, O hide those hills of snow
Which thy frozen bosom bears,
On whose tops the pinks that grow
Are as those that April wears.

You feel inclined at least to hide the pink strawberry by swallowing it, and to melt the hills of snow by sucking them up through a delicate straw together with the dancing golden liquid, and all the by-delights that lie hidden in that glorious drink. Then you may retire into a corner, and, kicking up your heels even unto an altitude of six feet from the ground, rest them there on some friendly ledge, and enjoy your mild Havannah, or your keif, or your quid, or your passion for castle-building. There are degrees, my son, in human enjoyment. A cool tankard and a long pipe in an arbour looking upon a smooth bowling-green has, ere now, been the dearest solace of scholars and divines. Others can find no enjoyment more gratifying than a bright fire, close-drawn curtains, a silver teapot, and an uncut number of the Quarterly. There are men whom you could not tempt with gold or jewels or tickets for the Lord Mayor's banquet, to say there was a greater pleasure in life than playing with their children. Sugar-and-water and a toothpick will content some; a cigar and cold toddy on the tiles others; but, for my part, I do not know a pleasanter animal enjoyment, of the tranquil, meditative

kind, than an American drink and a cigar, and my keif afterwards. Yet even these réjouissances are transitory: a melancholy bubbling in the straw tells of the last drop of the Fiscal Agent. Then comes the empty glass, and payment, and remorse.

The bar-keeper and his assistants possess the agility of acrobats and the prestidigitative skill of magicians. They are all bottle-conjurors. They toss the drinks about; they throw brimful glasses over their heads; they shake the saccharine, glacial, and alcoholic ingredients in long tin tubes; they scourge eggs and cream into froth; they send bumpers shooting from one end of the bar to the other without spilling a drop; they give change, talk politics, tell quaint anecdotes, swear strange oaths, smoke, chew, and expectorate with astonishing celerity and dexterity. I should like to be a bar-keeper, if I were clever enough.

It is in the Saint Boblink House that you can comprehend, in its majestic amplitude, the great American institution of liquoring. Here, where the despoiled loafer and the shrewd merchant, sallow from Wall Street bargains; the over-dressed, over-smoked, over-saturated-with-tobacco-juice aristocrat from Fifth Avenue; the cotton-sampling clerk; the dry-goods selling dissenter, not being an advocate of Maine its liquor-law, or a sitter at the feet of John B. Gough; the Congress colonel; the courteous steamboat captain; the scorched southerner; the apathetic Dutchman, from his Hudson farm; the turn-down collared lecturer; the black-satin waistcoated editor; the raw-boned Kentuckian; the blue-eyed German; the boastful Irishman, mingle and drink, and drink again. The thing is gravely done—sternly, almost solemnly. The drink is a duty, as well as a mere relaxation and refreshment. It is a part of the mission of the sovereign people; and the list of American drinks should be hung up in the national museum, along with the national tar-bucket, the national feather-bed, the national revolver and bowie-knife, the national declaration of independence, and the national and almighty dollar.

I have no hesitation in saying that the table-d'hôte at the Saint Boblink House is the very best array of eatables in the whole world. In cookery, the subtlety of the sauces, and refinement of the flavouring, may be surpassed by some few European diplomatic chefs; but the quantity and quality of the viands do, to adopt a native locution, whip all creation. Roast and boiled, fried and stewed, fish, soups, including the delicious terrapin, and the famous Gumbo; oysters (such oysters!) game, poultry, rice birds from South Carolina infinitely preferable to ortolans, pastry, sweets, jellies, blanc-manges and ices. For an Apician feast, commend me to the Saint Boblink. Sing, muse, too, of its breakfasts, with their plethora of strange but

delicious fishes, and their hundred varieties of bread, hot and stale.

This is, then, the Saint Boblink Hotel, with its clerks' office like a banker's counting-house; with its courteous, accomplished clerks in rings and chains; with its bridal chambers fitted up in white satin, ivory and gold, for new married couples on their wedding tour; with its hundred mechanical appliances for bell-ringing, message-calling and trouble-saving of every description; with its electric telegraph laid on like gas or water, its countless waiters, its really moderate charges, and admirable management and discipline. Can anything be wanting to make it perfect? Little, perhaps, save the conversion of the bedrooms into which single travellers are put, from comfortless, scanty, draughty dogholes, into decently furnished and moderately comfortable chambers, and save the abolition or banishment of that great nuisance, and curse, and scandal, the expectoration of tobacco juice.

Come away from the Saint Boblink House, traveller, for we are wanted in Europe again. By the time we return to the States, perhaps the giant palace will have been burnt down and built up again, bigger and handsomer than ever.

FAR EAST.

BETWEEN Great Britain and Japan, a treaty has been ratified which opens, under considerable restrictions, certain Japanese ports. This consent to partial intercourse with men of Anglo-Saxon blood was, in the first instance, obtained by the Americans; and, by uniting tact with firmness, the Americans have won both for themselves and us—in one of the new ports, Hakodadi—much good-will and more reasonable licence than was contemplated, on the Japanese side, in the terms of an unreasonable treaty. Our treaty followed upon the American, formally giving share to England in all rights conceded to our cousins. We have been negotiating, however, with especial view to the use of Nagasaki harbour; and, either because the native authorities in that part belong to a less liberal party, or because our admiral was too chary of self-assertion, English right of entering into Nagasaki as per treaty, is at present worth little enough. In the meantime, Russia, encroaching neighbour to the Japanese, has been also treaty-making. The Russian admiral began, according to the advice of the great traveller, Von Siebold, all submission and concession; but, having discovered that too great a show of consideration for the prejudices of the Japanese officials was not the way to get any concessions from them, he changed his policy. The consequence was, that whatever was desired was asked for, and abided by—and had.

Ships of an English squadron coming last year, in the Japanese seas, and hovering near

the Russian settlements, about the mouth of the Amoor, put more than once into ports of Japan opened by the treaty; deriving such advantage as they could from its provisions. On board one of these ships was a black-coated captain, Bernard Whittingham, of the Royal Engineers. He sailed with the commodore as a visitor on board the *Sibylle*, and took some pleasant notes of what he saw, which notes he has now published. Of Japan generally we gave an account in our third volume, page one hundred and sixty-three; we shall not, therefore, repeat accounts of manners and customs that have been already described in *Household Words*. To what we have before said, our purpose is to add some notes founded on Captain Whittingham's experience; from which a little may be gathered of the spirit of our present relations with the Japanese, and of the prospect of a more extended intercourse hereafter with this hermit people.

Hakodadi harbour is shaped like a stirrup, with about one-half of the foot-plate broken off; the bay forming it, being a segment of a circle four miles broad, five deep, with a rocky peninsula (the broken stirrup foot) stretching across half-way, and narrowing the entrance, to a width of two miles. On the steep inner side of the peninsula, along its lower slopes, the town is built; above rise green hills belted with pine and beech, dotted with gardens and temples, and ending in peaks; none of a higher elevation than about twelve hundred feet. A narrow sandy isthmus connects this peninsula with the mainland of the large island of Yezo, to which the port belongs. Then comes level ground well covered with villages, hamlets and farms nestled among trees. This ground very soon runs into rich uplands; and, beyond the uplands rise bold mountains ever higher and higher, till, in the distance, the snow-capped peak of an extinct volcano towers above all. That is the land scenery, with trains of ponies moving on the roads, small bullocks feeding on the lower lands, and seagulls, at peace with society (for the Japanese kill no animals except it be a man or fish), ready to alight on any vessel, and inspect it at their leisure.

The sole animal food used in Japan is fish, with which the seas teem; and the harbours and shores are lined with fishing boats. At a fishing settlement on the coast of Sagalien so much fresh fish was brought daily to the squadron, that, on board the *Sibylle* alone, there were sent in one day six hundred salmon of from three to seven pounds weight. Our squadron found at Hakodadi an enlightened governor, who was said to be of the blood of the Ziogoon.

Yezo is the island lying to the north of the chief island Nippon on which is Jeddo, the Japanese metropolis. It has a more rigorous climate, and as Hakodadi (it was a fishing town dependent on the neighbouring feudal prince of Matsmai) is a port but recently

raised into importance, the government officials sent thither from Jeddo were feeling the chill of the sharp winds that, even in May—when the squadron paid its first visit—were whistling down from among the mountains. At Jeddo, said the governor's secretary (who had been but a few weeks in the north) in the depth of winter, two silk robes keep out the cold. "Here it is May; and, though I am now clothed in five, I shiver." He spoke, in fact, very much as an Italian might speak of May at Scarborough.

While using all official forms—and Japanese officials are as courteous as they are cunning—the authorities at Hakodadi manifested a decided kindness towards the strangers. The Americans had left behind them a good character; which was by the English who came after them, maintained and strengthened. The first ceremonious visits to the town were made under circumstances of jealous reserve on behalf of the Japanese; the officers invited were marched between files of guards; police walked in the van and rear to see that every native had retired within doors, and the tradition of the country kept up. Apart from ceremony, however, it was in the power of our officers to roam over the hills or through the surrounding villages; and, tiring out their escort, to find their way unguarded through back streets of the town, provided they fell quietly in the main streets again under the customary surveillance. There was abundant opportunity of getting knowledge of the temper of the people; and this proved to be so friendly, that some self-command was needed to obey the letter of the treaty, by resisting all the invitations of the natives to enter their houses and accept their hospitality. However tyrannical the government, the people of Japan—if those of Hakodadi be a sample of the rest—are well-fed, cheerful, and contented. Captain Whittingham saw no beggary or misery in the worst suburbs of the port. The men everywhere were well to do, and prompt with smiles or laughter; the children fat and rosy; the unmarried girls tall and well-shaped, with bright complexions, and teeth purely white, blackened on marriage. They grow soon old, and are when old frightfully ugly; but that is their nature, or our ignorance of the charm that may be found by a people even in the decrepit form of its own national physiognomy. Tartars, Hindus, negroes, all except our own Caucasians, are unendurable to us after their features have been broken down by age, and the true skull begins to grin in its own ominous way behind the sunken eyes and fallen cheeks. Yet we can see beauty in the eye of those of our own race. So, and as justly, does the old Japanese husband when he invokes blessings on the frosty pow of his old Japanese wife.

The Japanese are quick at learning; and,

although they have for a peculiar reason ceased for a long time to be the commercial race they were once and will doubtless be again, the desire of picking up experience and knowledge is most active among them. The higher authorities collect European instruments. The governor of Hakodadi, when paying a return visit to the English commodore—after all the rest of his party had been busy with ale, claret, sherry, and Old Tom, reminded his host of a promise to show him the ship; and, not only looked over it, but discussed with the utmost intelligence all that he saw. "Immediately on entering the main-deck," says Captain Whittingham, "he stopped at the first gun; and, with great shrewdness, asked several questions about the foundry of guns, the use of gear about it, and, thoroughly understanding the loading, desired to see the tubes and to be permitted to fire one; which he did, after stooping down and looking at the pointing. He then asked for one of the carbines which he saw in their place above his head, capped it, pointed it out of the port and fired it. He made most pertinent inquiries concerning every object that struck him as he went round the ship, occasionally taking a roll of paper from the all-capacious breast of the robe, and roughly sketching anything the manufacture of which he wished to have elucidated. There was a calm dignity and good-breeding in his method of eliciting information which was really admirable, and led us to attach weight to the interpreter's report that he was of the Ziogoon family, and sent to Hakodadi on the part of that dignitary, who governs but does not reign. This, it will be seen, differs entirely from the Chinese spirit; and, it must not be forgotten that the shutting up of Japan—in the first instance caused by violence—has been maintained under the idea that it is a political necessity; although it is, in reality, antagonistic to the nature and the habits of the people.

The common people at Hakodadi showed their readiness to fraternise in every way possible. On the occasion of each visit of the squadron, men and boys, whenever the sailors went where they could be accosted, made good-humoured approaches and desired opportunities of picking up morsels of English. Some scraps they had gathered from the Americans, which they repeated merrily and called Americanee; the desires for English were very strong. Objects would be pointed out, and English names of them inquired for, then repeated with a high enjoyment. We will quote from Captain Whittingham—with some alterations for the purpose of compression—the account given by him of a country ramble in the neighbourhood of Hakodadi. "One afternoon we went in the galley a little distance up the river nearest us, and landed close to a high trestle-bridge, which spanned a stream of forty or

fifty feet; a well laid out road twenty feet wide, with hedges on each side, and apparently leading into the country, promised us good views of rural life, and we accordingly followed it. The ditches on each side, the flowery banks, the willows growing in the hedgerows, all reminded us of home scenery, and the thatched cottages gleaming here and there at intervals were Englishlike. The proprietors, dressed in long grey robes, and sandals of straw or high wooden clogs, were rosy-cheeked, fat, and civil; and numberless healthy children ran out of every door to look at the English, and were generally accompanied by large white dogs, vociferous in the extreme. A tall, grey-bearded peasant came out of his house to meet us, and, with great courtesy of manners, invited us into it; unfortunately, this was forbidden by the port regulations, so that we contented ourselves with a glance at the comfortable interior, where a bright charcoal fire glowed, and on the raised and matted dais near it was an elderly dame busied in household offices. The straight, level roads, the divisions of property, the separate yet contiguous cottages, the mild politeness of the peasantry, and their sombre grey robes, reminded me of the happy domestic scenery of Lower Canada; picturesque churches were, however, wanted to complete the illusion. We had not proceeded far on the road when a stout elderly peasant joined us; and, good-naturedly pointing to a brawling stream, led us to its bank. He was a disciple of the gentle art. On our return to the road, and resuming our pace along it, the robust native accompanied us for a short space, until we approached a comfortable-looking cottage, into which he endeavoured to persuade us to enter, adding the inducement of drinking saki; the invitation was necessarily declined and we continued to stroll on. Presently, the wind being chilly, we asked the interpreter to go his own pace, and told him that we would return by the same road; and then stepped out for the first good walk we had had for many weeks. We could hardly imagine that the rural scene around us, through which we were enjoying a tête-à-tête unaccompanied by escorts, and one of us unarmed, the other with a light uniform sword, were in the jealously-guarded Japanese islands, and the politeness with which all who met us saluted completely reassured us."

So far all is in the highest degree promising; but, although good is spoken of this people on all hands, it is with the government and not the people that we have to deal; and, among the government officials, there is a restrictive party and a liberal party—an old Japan and a new Japan. If it be new Japan at Hakodadi, it is, beyond question, old Japan at Nagasaki. There, our sailors had no liberty to walk about, were kept to the terms of the treaty; which, in Japanese strictness, guards and counterguards every conces-

sion, till it may be interpreted into the weakest moonshine. English negotiators, not Americans, had paved the way at Nagasaki, and had so blundered, that their successors must submit, as they did on occasions of audience with the governor, to eat the sweetmeats taken to them in the waiting-chamber, instead of sitting with their hosts and experiencing, as at Hakodadi, all the refinement of true Eastern courtesy. Again, when our naval officers are admitted to the high and mighty presence of the governor of Nagasaki, he and his companions keep their seats; nor do they rise to bow to the queen's representatives when they depart. Incivility and ill blood have been bred out of a too weakly conciliatory demeanour in our own especial port. By maintaining a firm self-respect as the backbone of courtesy, American officers have obtained, as we have said, at Hakodadi, for themselves and us who follow them, goodwill and high consideration. It was at Nagasaki that the Russian negotiator was long trifled with; but changing his tactics, in the summer of eighteen hundred and fifty-four, he visited ports nearer Jeddo, and at last close to the Gulf of Jeddo itself. By persistence in his wishes he obtained the most useful treaty yet accorded by the rulers of Japan; for it is believed of this treaty, that it gives power to the Russians to send consuls to the ports, who are to be allowed to have chapels for worship according to their own ritual; that it stipulates for the provision, by the Japanese, of houses of recreation for the Russian sailors, while at the same time it procures for Russian officers and merchants right of free intercourse with the people. Secret articles of the same treaty are supposed to settle the boundary between Russia and Japan in the large northern island of Sagalien, and to promise to the Emperor of Japan protection against any attack from other western nations.

The Russian passion for extended boundary is as distinctly shown in the far east as in the west. Until some time after the breaking out of war, we did indeed suppose that Russia claimed some of the Kurile islands; but we did not know—what is now shown to be the case, and was indeed ascertained by the expedition, of which Captain Whittingham relates some of the doings—that Russian encroachment has already crept down over the northern half of the great fertile coal-yielding island Sagalien, one of the largest of the islands of Japan, inhabited by a fine race of sturdily bearded men, whom our authority admires as nobler-looking savages than the Red Indians. They live chiefly on sun-dried fish and seals; worship bears, which they keep caged in their villages; and are a kindly race. The officials from the central government of Japan had even retired from the southern part of this island; but returned on the evacuation by the Russians of some positions that they had taken up before the war. For

the full development of her position on the Amoor, Russia probably regards the command of the Straits of La Pérouse, between the southernmost cape of Sagalien and the northernmost of Yezo, as a political necessity. Whether hope of encroachment being ended in the west, the absorption of Japanese ground will go on henceforth in the east with more or less rapidity, and whether that also may not lead to future difficulties, are such questions as we are not likely to have answered yet. If the opened ports be opened by the course of trade much more effectually than at present, and the traders of America and Western Europe find their way in any numbers to Japan, the relations of Russia with that empire will no doubt then come into question, though it is to be hoped not in the form of a problem very hard to solve.

A VISION OF OLD BABYLON.

I.

OUTCRAPING from the Present's narrow cage,
I floated on the backward waves of Time,
Until I landed in that antique age
When the now hoary world was in its prime.
How young, and fresh, and green, all things did look !
I stood upon a broad and grassy plain,
Shrouded with leaves, between which, like a brook
Dash'd on the turf, in showers of golden rain,
The broken sunlight mottled all the land.
And soon between the trees I was aware
Of a vast city, girt with stony band,
That hung upon the burning, blue-bright air,
Like snowy clouds which that strange architect,
The Wind, has with his wayward fancies deck'd.

II.

A wilderness of beauty ! A domain
Of visions and stupendous thoughts in stone,
The sculptured dream of some enchanter's brain.
There did I see, all sunning in their own
Splendour and warmth, a thousand palaces
Where tower look'd out on tower ; all overgrown
With pictured deeds, and coiling traceries,
And monstrous shapes in strange conjunction met,
The idol phantoms of an age long past,
In midst of which the wing'd Bull was set :
And I saw temples of enormous size,
Silent, yet throng'd ; and pyramids that cast
Shadows upon each golden-freak'd pavilion,
And on the columns flush'd with azure and vermilion.

III.

And on the top of all the wind-blown towers,
The thronging terraces and ramparts fair,
And the flat house-roofs scorching in the air,
Elysian gardens bloom'd with breadths of flowers
And clouds of moist green leaves, that tenderly
Cool'd the fierce radiance sight could scarcely bear,
Or over grassy lawns hung fluttering high,
Like birds upon the wing, half-pausing there ;
Shadows where winds droop'd lingering with a sigh.
And there were fountains all of beaten gold,
That seem'd alive with staring imagery,
Fantastic as death ; from which forth roll'd,
Like spirits out of Sleep's enchanted ground,
Far-flashing streams that flung a light all round.

IV.

Babylon !—But, as I look'd, a cloud of sand,
Slowly advancing with dead, sulphurous heat,
Burnt up the youth and freshness of the land,
And all those gorgeous palaces did eat,
As locusts waste the harvest. One by one
Fell tower and pyramid, settling heavily
In the advancing desert's ashes dun ;
And those fair gardens faded in the eye
Of that great Desolation slowly growing
Above the outer walls and topmost stones ;
An arid sea, for ever, ever flowing,
Without an ebb, over an Empire's bones.

Which, in these days, some stranger's close inspection
Gives up, like History's awful resurrection.

A ROGUE'S LIFE.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS. CHAPTER THE FIRST.

I AM going to try if I can't write something about myself. My life has been rather a queer one. It may not seem particularly useful or respectable ; but it has been, in some respects, adventurous ; and that may give it claims to be read, even in the most prejudiced circles. I am an example of some of the workings of the social system of this illustrious country on the individual native ; and, if I may say so without unbecoming vanity, I should like to quote myself for the edification of my countrymen.

Who am I ? Uncommonly well connected. I came into this world with the great advantage of having Lady Malkinshaw for a grandmother, her ladyship's daughter for a mother, and Francis James Softly, Esq., M.D. (commonly called Doctor Softly) for a father. I put my father last, because he was not so well connected as my mother, and my grandmother first, because she was the best connected of the three. I have been, am still, and may continue to be, a Rogue ; but I hope I am not abandoned enough yet to forget the respect that is due to rank. On this account, I trust, nobody will show such want of regard for my feelings as to expect me to say much about my mother's brother. That inhuman person committed an outrage on his family by making a fortune in the soap and candle trade. I apologise for mentioning him, even in an accidental way. The fact is, he left my sister, Annabella, a legacy of rather a peculiar kind, saddled with certain conditions which indirectly affected me ; but this passage of family history need not be produced just yet. I apologise a second time for alluding to money matters before it was absolutely necessary. Let me get back to a pleasing and reputable subject, by saying a word or two more about my father.

I am rather afraid that Doctor Softly was not a sharp medical man ; for in spite of his great connections, he did not get a very magnificent practice as a physician. As a general practitioner, he might have bought a comfortable business, with a house and snug surgery-shop attached ; but the son-in-law of

Lady Malkinshaw was obliged to hold up his head, and set up his carriage, and live in a street near a fashionable square, and keep an expensive and clumsy footman to answer the door, instead of a cheap and tidy housemaid. How he managed to "maintain his position" (that is the right phrase), I never could tell. His wife did not bring him a farthing. When the honourable and gallant baronet, her father, died, he left the widowed Lady Malkinshaw with her worldly affairs in a curiously involved state. Her son (of whom I feel truly ashamed to be obliged to speak again so soon) made an effort to extricate his mother—involved himself in a series of unfathomable messes, which commercial people call, I believe, transactions—struggled for a little while to get out of them in the character of an independent gentleman—failed—and then spiritlessly availed himself of the oleaginous refuge of the soap and candle trade. His mother always looked down upon him after this; but borrowed money of him also—in order to show, I suppose, that her maternal interest in her son was not quite extinct. My father tried to follow her example—in his wife's interests, of course; but the soap-boiler brutally buttoned up his pockets, and told my father to go into business for himself. Thus it happened that we were certainly a poor family, in spite of the fine appearance we made, the fashionable street we lived in, the neat brougham we kept, and the clumsy and expensive footman who answered our door.

What was to be done with me in the way of education? If my father had consulted his means, I should have been sent to a cheap commercial academy; but he had to consult his relationship to Lady Malkinshaw; so I was sent to one of the most fashionable and famous of the great public schools. I will not mention it by name, because I don't think the masters would be proud of my connection with it.

The reader has probably been into the pit of the opera, on the night of an attractive performance, and has seen to what a condition the lower middle classes are reduced when they will intrude themselves into a place dedicated to the pleasures of rich and titled people. He is aware that these unfortunates pay the sum of seven shillings each for admission to a building in which no seat is guaranteed to them for their money. He has seen them congregating before closed doors—a mob disguised for the occasion in evening costume, the men in black trousers, and the women with bare shoulders—ready, when the bolt is undone, to scramble for the places which their money has not secured for them beforehand. They push in with might and main; the nimble and stronger secure seats; the rest—men and women together—stand in the gangway for the whole evening, if they can, or sit down wearily on dirty

steps and unpossessed corners of benches, when they can stand no longer. All around them are comfortable boxes, reserved for the distinguished people who can roll to the theatre in their carriages; between them and the stage are snug seats kept empty for the other distinguished people who can pay gold instead of silver. For these rich and titled spectators the place affords every possible luxury; for the payer of seven shillings it provides almost every conceivable discomfort. Has it ever occurred to the opera-going reader that these poor members of the audience have no business in the rich theatre, and that the neglectful manner in which they are treated there is, in effect, a not very roundabout method of reminding them of this, if they could only be brought to understand it—a practical rebuke, unfeelingly administered to a foolish ambition? Why will they try to nibble at the fashionable luxury of which they cannot afford to purchase a comfortable meal? Why don't they go to a cheap theatre of their own, to which they can walk in their everyday costume, and in which they can secure the best place to be had for less than the seven shillings which secure them nothing but admission inside the doors at the other place? Why can't they do this? And when will they see that they have no business among the rich people, and, what is more, that the rich people themselves (I say nothing of the purveyors of entertainment to the rich people), evidently think so?

If these thoughts have ever occurred to you at the Opera, you will be at no loss to understand what my position was at the fashionable public school. The allowance my father could afford to give me would have made me happy at a commercial academy; but as it was about a tenth part of the allowance which the rich fathers of the other boys were able to give them, it only made me wretched at the fashionable public school. I was one of the outside standers in the pit, looking at my fortunate superiors in the boxes and stalls. "You are the son of a gentleman," said my father, at parting, "and you are going to be educated among gentlemen, where you will make aristocratic connections that will be of the greatest use to you in after life." There is a remarkable observance of form in the talking of arrant nonsense. Wisdom utters itself in varying phrases and tones; but folly has its set forms of expression, which seem to suit alike all the talkers of a whole generation. I have heard that lamentable commonplace about the "making of aristocratic connections," repeated fifty times, by fifty different parents, invariably in the exact form of words which I have just quoted, with the same solemn assurance of expression, and the same bland contentment of tone which I remember as characteristic of the Doctor, when he and I parted at the school door: "Make aristo-

cratic connections!" I was a practical boy, and I set to work to make money instead. It was impossible for me to associate comfortably with my schoolfellows, with such an allowance as I possessed. I earned money, therefore, by doing lessons for dunces, saved it when I could, and lent my savings to young spendthrifts, at extravagant rates of interest. I led a surreptitious life of it, both in the school and in the playground, and learnt my first lessons in the occult science of Roguery under the very shadow of the aristocratic connections. I was found out, I was flogged, lectured, sent to Coventry. I ran away, and was flogged again. I ran away three times, and was flogged three times. I made four aristocratic connections, and had four pitched battles with them; three thrashed me, and one I thrashed. I learnt to play at cricket, to hate rich people, to cure warts, to write Latin verses, to swim, to recite speeches, to cook kidneys on toast, to draw caricatures of the masters, to construe Greek plays, to black boots, and to receive kicks and serious advice resignedly. Who will say that the fashionable public school was of no use to me, after that?

After I left school, I had the narrowest escape possible of intruding myself into another place of accommodation for distinguished people; in other words, I was very nearly being sent to college. Fortunately for me, my father lost a law-suit just in the nick of time, and was obliged to scrape together every farthing of available money that he possessed to pay for the luxury of going to law. If he could have saved his seven shillings, he would certainly have sent me to scramble for a place in the pit of the great university theatre; but his purse was empty, and his son was not eligible therefore for admission, in a gentlemanly capacity, at the doors.

The next thing was to choose a profession. Here the doctor was liberality itself, in leaving me to my own devices. I was of a roving adventurous temperament, and I should have liked to go into the army. But where was the money to come from, to pay for my commission? As to enlisting in the ranks, and working my way up, the social institutions of my country obliged the grandson of Lady Malkinshaw to begin military life as an officer and gentleman, or not to begin it at all. The army, therefore, was out of the question. The Church? Equally out of the question: since I could not pay for admission to the prepared place of accommodation for distinguished people, and could not accept a charitable free pass, in consequence of my high connections. The Bar? I should be five years getting to it, and should have to spend two hundred a-year in going circuit before I had earned a farthing. Physic? This really seemed the only gentlemanly refuge left; and yet, with the knowledge of my father's experience before me, I was

ungrateful enough to feel a secret dislike for it. It is a degrading confession to make; but I remember wishing I was not so highly connected, and absolutely thinking that the life of a commercial traveller would have suited me exactly if I had not been a poor gentleman. Driving about from place to place, living jovially at inns, seeing fresh faces constantly, and getting money by all this enjoyment, instead of spending it—what a life for me, if I had been the son of a haberdasher and the grandson of a groom's widow!

While my father was uncertain what to do with me, a new profession was suggested by a friend, which I shall repent not having been allowed to adopt, to the last day of my life. This friend was an eccentric old gentleman of large property, much respected in our family. One day, my father, in my presence, asked his advice about the best manner of starting me in life, with due credit to my connections and sufficient advantage to myself.

"Listen to my experience," said our eccentric friend, "and, if you are a wise man, you will make up your mind as soon as you have heard me. I have three sons. I brought my eldest son up to the Church; he is said to be getting on admirably, and he costs me three hundred a-year. I brought my second son up to the Bar; he is said to be getting on admirably, and he costs me four hundred a-year. I brought my third son up to *Quadrilles*—he has married an heiress, and he costs me nothing."

Ah, me! if that worthy sage's advice had only been followed—if I had been brought up to *Quadrilles*!—if I had only been cast loose on the ball-rooms of London, to qualify under Hymen, for a golden degree! O! you young ladies with money, I was five feet ten in my stockings; I was great at small-talk and dancing; I had glossy whiskers, curling locks, and a rich voice! Ye girls with golden guineas, ye nymphs with crisp bank-notes, mourn over the husband you have lost among you—over the Rogue who has broken the laws which, as the partner of a landed or fundholding woman, he might have helped to make on the benches of the British Parliament! O! ye hearths and homes sung about in so many songs—written about in so many books—shouted about in so many speeches with accompaniment of so much loud cheering: what a settler on the hearth-rug; what a possessor of property; what a bringer-up of a family, was snatched away from you, when the son of Doctor Softly was lost to the profession of *Quadrilles*!

It ended in my resigning myself to the misfortune of being a doctor. If I was a very good boy and took pains, and carefully mixed in the best society, I might hope in the course of years to succeed to my father's brougham, fashionably-situated house, and clumsy and expensive footman. There was a

prospect for a lad of spirit, with the blood of the early Malkinshaws (who were Rogues of great capacity and distinction in the feudal times), coursing adventurous through every vein! I look back on my career, and when I remember the patience with which I accepted a medical destiny, I appear to myself in the light of a hero. Nay, I even went beyond the passive virtue of accepting my destiny—I actually studied, I made the acquaintance of the skeleton, I was on friendly terms with the muscular system, and the mysteries of Physiology dropped in on me in the kindest manner whenever they had an evening to spare. Even this was not the worst of it. I disliked the abstruse studies of my new profession; but I absolutely hated the diurnal slavery of qualifying myself, in a social point of view, for future success in it. My fond medical parent insisted on introducing me to his whole connection. I went round visiting in the neat brougham—with a stethoscope and medical review in the front-pocket, with Doctor Softly by my side, keeping his face well in view at the window—to canvas for patients, in the character of my father's hopeful successor. Never have I been so ill at ease in prison, as I was in that carriage. I have felt more at home in the dock (such is the natural depravity and perversity of my disposition) than ever I felt in the drawing-rooms of my father's distinguished patrons and respectable friends. Nor did my miseries end with the morning calls. I was commanded to attend all dinner-parties, and to make myself agreeable at all balls. The dinners were the worst trial. Sometimes, indeed, we contrived to get ourselves asked to the houses of high and mighty entertainers, where we ate and drank the best of victuals and liquors, and fortified ourselves sensibly and snugly in that way against the frigidity of the company. Of these repasts I have no hard words to say; it is of the dinners we gave ourselves, and of the dinners which people in our rank of life gave to us, that I now bitterly complain.

I have already alluded to the remarkable adherence to set forms of speech which characterises the talkers of arrant nonsense. Precisely the same sheepish following of one given example distinguishes the ordering of genteel dinners. When we gave a dinner at home, we had gravy soup, turbot and lobster-sauce, haunch of mutton, boiled fowls and tongue, lukewarm oyster-patties and sticky curry for side dishes; wild duck, cabinet-pudding, jelly, cream, and tartlets. All excellent things, except when you have to eat them continually. We lived upon them entirely in the season. Every one of our hospitable friends gave us a return-dinner, which was a perfect copy of ours—just as ours was a perfect copy of theirs, last year. They boiled what we boiled, and we roasted what they roasted. We none of us ever changed the succession of the courses—or

made more or less of them—or altered the position of the fowls opposite the mistress and the haunch opposite the master. My stomach used to quail within me, in those times, when the tureen was taken off and the inevitable gravy-soup smell renewed its daily acquaintance with my nostrils, and warned me of the persistent eatable formalities that were certain to follow. I suppose that honest people, who have known what it is to get no dinner (being a Rogue, I have myself never wanted for one), have gone through some very acute suffering under that privation. It may be some consolation to them to know that, next to absolute starvation, the same company-dinner, every day, is one of the hardest trials that assail human endurance. I date my first serious determination to throw over the medical profession at the earliest convenient opportunity, from the second season's series of dinners at which my aspirations, as a rising physician, unavoidably and regularly condemned me to be present.

The opportunity I wanted presented itself in a curious way, and led, unexpectedly enough, to some rather important consequences. I have already stated, among the other branches of human attainment which I acquired at the public school, that I learnt to draw caricatures of the masters who were so obliging as to educate me. I had a natural faculty for this useful department of art. I improved it greatly by practice in secret after I left school, and I ended by making it a source of profit and pocket-money to me when I entered the medical profession. What was I to do? I could not expect for years to make a halfpenny, as a physician. My genteel walk in life led me away from all immediate sources of emolument, and my father could only afford to give me an allowance which was too preposterously small to be mentioned. I had helped myself surreptitiously to pocket-money at school, and I was obliged to repeat the process, in another manner, at home! At the time of which I write, the Art of Caricature was just approaching the close of its coloured and most extravagant stage of development. The subtlety and truth to Nature required for the pursuit of it now, had hardly begun to be thought of then. Sheer farce and coarse burlesque, with plenty of colour for the money, still made up the sum of what the public of those days wanted. I was first assured of my capacity for the production of these requisites, by a medical friend of the ripe critical age of nineteen. He knew a print-publisher, and enthusiastically showed him a portfolio full of my sketches, taking care at my request not to mention my name. Rather to my surprise (for I was too conceited to be greatly amazed by the circumstance), the publisher picked out a few of the best of my wares, and boldly bought them of me—of course, at his own price. From that

time I became, in an anonymous way, one of the young buccaneers of British Caricature; cruising about here there and everywhere, at all my intervals of spare time, for any prize in the shape of a subject which it was possible to pick up. Little did my highly-connected mother think that, among the coloured prints in the shop-window, which disrespectfully illustrated the public and private proceedings of distinguished individuals, certain specimens bearing the classic signature of "Thersites junior," were produced from designs furnished by her studious and medical son. Little did my respectable father imagine when, with great difficulty and vexation, he succeeded in getting me now and then smuggled, along with himself, inside the pale of fashionable society,—that he was helping me to study likenesses which were destined under my reckless treatment to make the public laugh at some of his most august patrons, and to fill the pockets of his son with professional fees, never once dreamed of in his philosophy.

For more than a year I managed, unsuspected, to keep the Privy Purse fairly supplied by the exercise of my caricaturing abilities. But the day of detection was to come. Whether my medical friend's admiration of my satirical sketches led him into talking about them in public with too little reserve; or whether the servants at home found private means of watching me in my moments of Art-study, I know not: but that some one betrayed me, and that the discovery of my illicit manufacture of caricatures was actually communicated even to the grandmotherly head and fount of the family honour, is a most certain and lamentable matter of fact. One morning my father received a letter from Lady Malkinshaw herself, informing him, in a handwriting crooked with poignant grief, and blotted at every third word by the violence of virtuous indignation, that "Thersites junior," was his own son, and that, in one of the last of the "ribald's" caricatures her own venerable features were unmistakably represented as belonging to the body of a large owl!

Of course, I laid my hand on my heart and indignantly denied everything. Useless. My original model for the owl had got proofs of my guilt that were not to be resisted. The doctor, ordinarily the most mellifluous and self-possessed of men, flew into a violent, roaring, cursing passion, on this occasion—declared that I was imperilling the honour and standing of the family—insisted on my never drawing another caricature, either for public or private purposes, as long as I lived; and ordered me to go forthwith and ask pardon of Lady Malkinshaw in the humblest terms that it was possible to select. I answered dutifully that I was quite ready to obey, on the condition that he should reimburse me by a

trebled allowance for what I should lose by giving up the Art of Caricature, or, that Lady Malkinshaw should confer on me the appointment of physician in waiting on her with a handsome salary attached. These extremely moderate stipulations so increased my father's anger, that he asserted, with an unmentionably vulgar oath, his resolution to turn me out of doors if I did not do as he bid me, without daring to hint at any conditions whatsoever. I bowed, and said, that I would save him the exertion of turning me out of doors, by going of my own accord. He shook his fist at me; after which, it obviously became my duty, as a member of a gentlemanly and peaceful profession, to leave the room. The same evening I left the house, and I have never once given the clumsy and expensive footman the trouble of answering the door to me since that time.

I have reason to believe that my exodus from home was, on the whole, favourably viewed by my mother, as tending to remove any possibility of my bad character and conduct interfering with my sister's advancement in life. By dint of angling with great dexterity and patience, under the direction of both her parents, my handsome sister Annabella had succeeded in catching an eligible husband, in the shape of a wizened, miserly, mahogany-coloured man, turned fifty, who had made a fortune in the West Indies. His name was Batterbury; he had been dried up under a tropical sun, so as to look as if he would keep for ages; he had two subjects of conversation, the yellow fever and the advantage of walking exercise: and he was barbarian enough to take a violent dislike to me. He had proved a very delicate fish to hook; and, even when Annabella had caught him, my father and mother had great difficulty in landing him—principally, they were good enough to say, in consequence of my presence on the scene. Hence the decided advantage of my removal from home. It is a very pleasant reflection to me, now, to remember how disinterestedly I studied the good of my family in those early days.

Abandoned entirely to my own resources, I naturally returned to my business of caricaturing with renewed ardour. About this time, Thersites Junior really began to make something like a reputation, and to walk abroad habitually with a bank-note comfortably lodged among the other papers in his pocket-book. For a year I lived a gay and glorious life in some of the freest society in London; at the end of that time, my tradesmen, without any provocation on my part, sent in their bills. I found myself in the very absurd position of having no money to pay them, and told them all so with the frankness which is one of the best sides of my character. They received my advances towards a better understanding with brutal incivility, and treated me soon afterwards with a want of confidence which I may

forgive, but can never forget. One day, a dirty stranger touched me on the shoulder, and showed me a dirty slip of paper which I at first presumed to be his card. Before I could tell him what a vulgar document it looked like, two more dirty strangers put me into a hackney coach. Before I could prove to them that this proceeding was a gross infringement on the liberties of the British subject, I found myself lodged within the walls of a prison.

Well! and what of that? Who am I that I should object to being in prison, when so many of the royal personages and illustrious characters of history have been there before me? Can I not carry on my vocation in greater comfort here than I could in my father's house? Have I any anxieties outside these walls? No: for my beloved sister is married—the family net has landed Mr. Batterbury at last. No: for I read in the paper, but the other day, that Doctor Softly (doubtless through the interest of Lady Malkinshaw) has been appointed the King's-Barber-Surgeon's-Deputy-Consulting Physician. My relatives are comfortable in their sphere—let me proceed forthwith to make myself comfortable in mine. Pen, ink, and paper, if you please, Mr. Gaoler: I wish to write to my esteemed publisher.

Dear Sir,—Please advertise a series of twelve Racy Prints, from my fertile pencil, entitled *Scenes of Modern Prison Life*, by Thersites Junior. The two first designs will be ready by the end of the week, to be paid for on delivery, according to the terms settled between us for my previous publications of the same size. With great regard and esteem, faithfully yours,
FRANK SOFTLY.

Having thus provided for my support in prison, I was enabled to introduce myself to my fellow-debtors, and to study character for the new series of prints, on the very first day of my incarceration, with my mind quite at ease.

If the reader desires to make acquaintance with the associates of my captivity, I must refer him to *Scenes of Modern Prison Life*, by Thersites Junior, now doubtless extremely scarce, but producible to the demands of patience and perseverance, I should imagine, if anybody will be so obliging as to pass a week or so over the catalogue of the British Museum. My fertile pencil has delineated the characters I met with, at that period of my life, with a force and distinctness which my pen cannot hope to rival—has portrayed them all more or less prominently, with the one solitary exception of a prisoner called Gentleman Jones. The reasons why I excluded him from my portrait-gallery are so honourable to both of us, that I must ask permission briefly to record them.

My fellow captives soon discovered that I was studying their personal peculiarities for my own advantage and for the public amusement. Some thought the thing a good joke;

some objected to it, and quarrelled with me. Liberality in the matter of liquor and small loans, reconciled a large proportion of the objectors to their fate; the sulky minority I treated with contempt, and scourged avengingly with the smart lash of caricature. I was at that time probably the most impudent man of my age in all England, and the common herd of ill-tempered prisoners quailed before the magnificence of my assurance. One prisoner only set me and my pencil successfully at defiance. That prisoner was Gentleman Jones.

He had received his name from the suavity of his countenance, the inveterate politeness of his language, and the unassailable composure of his manner. He was in the prime of life, but very bald—had been in the army and the coal trade—wore very stiff collars and prodigiously long wristbands—never laughed, but talked with remarkable glibness, and was never known to lose his temper under the most aggravating circumstances of prison existence.

He abstained from interfering with me and my studies, until it was reported in our society, that in the sixth print of my series, Gentleman Jones, highly caricatured, was to form one of the principal figures. He then appealed to me personally and publicly, on the racket-ground, in the following terms:

"Sir," said he, with his usual politeness and his unwavering smile, "you will greatly oblige me by not caricaturing my personal peculiarities. I am so unfortunate as not to possess a sense of humour; and if you did my likeness, I am afraid I should not see the joke of it."

"Sir," I returned, with my customary impudence, "it is not of the slightest importance whether *you* see the joke of it or not. The public will—and that is enough for me."

With that civil speech, I turned on my heel; and the prisoners near all burst out laughing. Gentleman Jones, not in the least altered or ruffled, smoothed down his wristbands, smiled, and walked away.

The same evening I was in my room alone, designing the new print, when there came a knock at the door, and Gentleman Jones walked in. I got up, and asked what the devil he wanted. He smiled, and turned up his long wristbands.

"Only to give you a lesson in politeness," said Gentleman Jones.

"What do you mean, sir? How dare you—?"

The answer was a smart slap in the face. I instantly struck out in a state of fury—was stopped with great neatness—and received in return a blow on the head, which sent me down on the carpet half stunned, and too giddy to know the difference between the floor and the ceiling.

"Sir," said Gentleman Jones, smoothing down his wristbands again, and addressing

me blandly as I lay on the floor. "I have the honour to inform you that you have now received your first lesson in politeness. Always be civil to those who are civil to you. The little matter of the caricature we will settle on a future occasion. I wish you good evening."

The noise of my fall had been heard by the other occupants of rooms on my landing. Most fortunately for my dignity, they did not come in to see what was the matter until I had been able to get into my chair again. When they entered, I felt that the impression of the slap was red on my face still, but the mark of the blow was hidden by my hair. Under these fortunate circumstances, I was able to keep up my character among my friends, when they enquired about the scuffle, by informing them that Gentleman Jones had audaciously slapped my face, and that I had been obliged to retaliate by knocking him down. My word in the prison was as good as his; and if my version of the story fairly got the start of his, I had the better chance of the two of being believed.

I was rather anxious, the next day, to know what course my polite and pugilistic instructor would take. To my utter amazement, he bowed to me as civilly as usual, when we met in the yard; he never denied my version of the story; and when my friends laughed at him as a thrashed man, he took not the slightest notice of their agreeable merriment. Antiquity, I think, furnishes us with few more remarkable characters than Gentleman Jones.

That evening I thought it desirable to invite a friend to pass the time with me. As long as my liquor lasted, he stopped; when it was gone, he went away. I was just locking the door after him, when it was pushed open gently, but very firmly, and Gentleman Jones walked in.

My pride, which had not allowed me to apply for protection to the prison authorities, would not allow me now to call for help. I tried to get to the fireplace and arm myself with the poker, but Gentleman Jones was too quick for me. "I have come, sir, to give you a lesson in morality to-night," he said; and up went his right hand.

I stopped the preliminary slap, but before I could hit him, his terrible left fist reached my head again; and down I fell once more—upon the hearth-rug this time—not over-heavily.

"Sir," said Gentleman Jones, making me a bow, "you have now received your first lesson in morality. Always speak the truth; and never say what is false of another man behind his back. To-morrow, with your kind permission, we will finally settle the adjourned question of the caricature. Good-night."

I was far too sensible a man to leave the settling of that question to him. The first thing in the morning I sent a polite note to

Gentleman Jones, informing him that I had abandoned all idea of exhibiting his likeness to the public in my series of prints, and giving him full permission to inspect every design I made before it went out of the prison. I received a most civil answer, thanking me for my courtesy, and complimenting me on the extraordinary aptitude with which I profited by the most incomplete and elementary instruction. I thought I deserved the compliment, and I think so still. Our conduct, on either side, as I have already intimated, was honourable to us. It was honourable attention on the part of Gentleman Jones, to correct me when I was in error; it was honourable common sense in me, to profit by the correction. I have never seen Gentleman Jones since he compounded with his creditors, and got out of prison; but my feelings towards him are still those of profound gratitude and respect. He gave me the only useful teaching I ever had; and if this should meet the eye of Gentleman Jones I hereby thank him for beginning and ending my education in two evenings, without costing me or my family a single farthing.

To return to my business affairs. When I was comfortably settled in the prison, and knew exactly what I owed, I thought it my duty to my father to give him the first chance of getting me out. His answer to my letter contained a quotation from Shakspeare on the subject of thankless children, but no remittance of money. After that, my only course was to employ a lawyer and be declared a bankrupt. I was most uncivilly treated, and remanded two or three times. When everything I possessed had been sold for the benefit of my creditors, I was reprimanded and let out. It is pleasant to think that, even then, my faith in myself and in human nature was still not shaken.

About ten days before my liberation, I was thunderstruck at receiving a visit from my sister's mahogany-coloured husband, Mr. Batterbury. When I was respectably settled at home, this gentleman would not so much as look at me without a frown; and now, when I was a scamp in prison, he mercifully and fraternally came to condole with me on my misfortunes. A little dexterous questioning disclosed the secret of this prodigious change in our relations towards each other, and informed me of a family event which altered my position towards my sister in the most whimsical manner.

While I was being removed to the bankruptcy court, my uncle in the soap and candle trade was being removed to the other world. His will took no notice of my father or my mother; but he left to my sister (always supposed to be his favourite in the family) a most extraordinary legacy of possible pin-money, in the shape of a contingent reversion to the sum of three thousand pounds, payable on the death of Lady Malkinshaw, provided

I survived her! Whether this document sprang into existence out of any of his involved money transactions with his mother, was more than Mr. Batterbury could tell. I could ascertain nothing in relation to it, except that the bequest was accompanied by some cynical remarks, to the effect that the testator would feel happy if his legacy were instrumental in reviving the dormant interest of only one member of Doctor Softly's family in the fortunes of the hopeful young gentleman who had run away from home. My esteemed uncle evidently felt that he could not in common decency avoid doing something for his sister's family; and he had done it accordingly in the most malicious and mischievous way. This was characteristic of him; he was just the man, if he had not possessed the document before, to have had it drawn out on his death-bed for the amiable purpose which it was now devoted to serve.

This amused me, and so did the conduct of Mr. Batterbury. The miserly little wretch not only tried to conceal his greedy desire to save his own pockets by securing the liberal allowance of pin-money left to his wife, but absolutely persisted in ignoring the plain fact that his visit to me sprang from the serious pecuniary interest which he and Annabella now had in the life and health of your humble servant. I made all the necessary jokes about the strength of the vital principle in Lady Malkinshaw, and the broken condition of my own constitution; but he solemnly abstained from understanding one of them. I quizzed him on his two favourite subjects, telling him we had a West Indian debtor in the prison, next door to me, afflicted with yellow fever; and asking how much walking exercise in the yard he would recommend as likeliest to keep me healthy in the midst of infection. He persisted in taking it all seriously; he resolutely kept up appearances in the very face of detection; not the faintest shade of red came over his wicked old mahogany face, as he told me how shocked he and his wife were at my present position, and how anxious Annabella was that he should not forget to give me her love. Tender-hearted creature! I had only been in prison six months when that overwhelming testimony of sisterly affection came to console me in my captivity. Ministering angel! you shall get your three thousand pounds. I am fifty years younger than Lady Malkinshaw, and I will take care of myself, Annabella, for thy dear sake!

The next time I saw Mr. Batterbury, was on the day when I at last got my discharge. He was not waiting to see where I was going next, or what vital risks I was likely to run on the recovery of my freedom, but to congratulate me, and to give me Annabella's love. It was a very gratifying attention, and I said as much, in tones of the deepest feeling.

"How is dear Lady Malkinshaw?" I asked, when my grateful emotions had subsided.

Mr. Batterbury shook his head mournfully. "I regret to say, not quite so well as her friends could wish," he answered. "The last time I had the pleasure of seeing her ladyship, she looked so yellow, that if we had been in Jamaica, I should have said it was a case of death in twelve hours. I respectfully endeavoured to impress upon her ladyship the necessity of keeping the functions of the liver active by daily walking exercise; time, distance, and pace being regulated with proper regard to her age—you understand me?—of course, with proper regard to her age."

"You could not possibly have given her better advice," said I. "When I saw her, as long as two years ago, Lady Malkinshaw's favourite delusion was that she was the most active woman of seventy-five in all England. She used to tumble down stairs two or three times a-week, then, because she never would allow anybody to help her; and could not be brought to believe that she was as blind as a mole, and as rickety on her legs as a child of a year old. Now you have encouraged her to take to walking, she will be more obstinate than ever, and is sure to tumble down daily, out of doors as well as in. Not even the celebrated Malkinshaw toughness can last out more than a few weeks of that practice. Considering the present shattered condition of my constitution, you couldn't have given her better advice—upon my word of honour, you couldn't have given her better advice!"

"I am afraid," said Mr. Batterbury, with a power of face I envied; "I am afraid, my dear Frank (let me call you Frank), that I don't quite apprehend your meaning: and we have unfortunately no time to enter into explanations. Five miles here by a roundabout way, is only half my daily allowance of walking exercise; five miles back by a roundabout way remain to be now accomplished. So glad to see you at liberty again! Mind you let us know where you settle, and take care of yourself; and do recognise the importance to the whole animal economy of daily walking exercise—do now! Did I give you Annabella's love? She's so well. Good-bye."

Away went Mr. Batterbury to finish his walk for the sake of his health; and away went I to visit my publisher for the sake of my pocket.

An unexpected disappointment awaited me. My *Scenes of Modern Prison Life* had not sold so well as had been anticipated, and my publisher was gruffly disinclined to speculate in any future works done in the same style. During the time of my imprisonment, a new caricaturist had started, with a manner of his own; he had already formed a new school, and the fickle public were all running

together after him and his disciples. I looked at his works and theirs; and, vain as I was, my practical common sense told me that my occupation as a caricaturist was gone. The new men had cast down broad farce under their feet, and had set up genteel comedy instead. I felt that I might feebly imitate, but that I could never successfully rival them; and I said to myself: "This scene in the drama of your life, my friend, has closed in; you must enter on another, or drop the curtain at once." Of course I entered on another.

I went to call on an artist-friend of my free-and-easy days. I had heard it darkly whispered that he was something of a vagabond. But the term is so loosely applied, and it seems so difficult, after all, to define what a vagabond is, or to strike the right moral balance between the vagabond work which is boldly published, and the vagabond work which is reserved for private circulation only, that I did not feel justified in holding aloof from my former friend; especially as I expected him, so far as advice went, to be of some assistance to me. Accordingly, I renewed our acquaintance, and told him my present difficulty. He was a sharp man, and he showed me a way out of it directly.

"You have a good eye for a likeness," he said; "and you have made it keep you hitherto. Very well. Make it keep you still. You can't profitably caricature people's faces any longer—never mind! go to the other extreme, and flatter them now. Turn portrait-painter. You shall have the use of this study three days in the week, for ten shillings a-week—sleeping on the hearth-rug included, if you like. Get your paints, rouse up your friends, set to work at once. Drawing is of no consequence; painting is of no consequence; perspective is of no consequence; ideas are of no consequence. Everything is of no consequence, except catching a likeness and flattering your sitter—and that you know you can do."

I felt that I could; and left him for the nearest colourman's.

Before I got to the shop, I met Mr. Batterbury, doing his four miles an hour. He stopped, shook hands with me affectionately, and asked where I was going. A wonderful idea suddenly struck me. Instead of answering his question, I asked after Lady Malkinshaw.

"Don't be alarmed," said Mr. Batterbury; "her ladyship tumbled down stairs yesterday morning."

"My dear sir, allow me to congratulate you," said I.

"Most fortunately," continued Mr. Batterbury, with a strong emphasis on the words, and a fixed stare at me; "most fortunately, the servant had been careless enough to leave a large bundle of clothes for the wash at the foot of the stairs, while she went to answer the door. Falling headlong from the landing,

her ladyship pitched (pardon me the expression)—pitched into the very middle of the bundle. She was a little shaken at the time, but is reported to be going on charmingly this morning. Most fortunate, was it not? Seen the papers? Awful news from Demerara—the yellow fever——"

"I wish I was at Demerara!" said I, in a hollow voice.

"You! Why?" exclaimed Mr. Batterbury, aghast.

"I am homeless, friendless, penniless," I went on, getting more hollow at every word. "All my intellectual instincts tell me that I could retrieve my position and live respectably in the world, if I might only try my hand at portrait-painting—the thing of all others that I am naturally fittest for. But I have nobody to start me; no sitter to give me a first chance; nothing in my pocket but three-and-sixpence; and nothing in my mind but a doubt whether I shall struggle on a little longer, or end it immediately in the Thames. Don't let me detain you from your walk, my dear sir. Those are the reasons why I wish I was at Demerara."

"Stop!" cried Mr. Batterbury; his mahogany face actually getting white with alarm. "Stop! Don't talk in that dreadfully unprincipled manner—don't, I implore, I insist! You have plenty of friends—you have me, and your sister. Take to portrait-painting—think of your family, and take to portrait-painting!"

"Where am I to get a sitter?" I inquired, with a gloomy shake of the head.

"Me," said Mr. Batterbury, with an effort. "I'll be your first sitter. As a beginner, and especially to a member of the family, I suppose your terms will be moderate. Small beginnings—you know the proverb?" Here he stopped; and a miserly leer puckered up his mahogany cheeks.

"I'll do you, life-size, down to your waistcoat, for fifty pounds," said I.

Mr. Batterbury winced, and looked about him to the right and left, as if he wanted to run away. He had five thousand a-year, but he contrived to look, at that moment, as if his utmost income was five hundred. I walked on a few steps.

"Surely those terms are rather high to begin with?" he said, walking after me. "I should have thought five-and-thirty, or perhaps forty——"

"A gentleman, sir, cannot condescend to bargain," said I, with mournful dignity. "Farewell!" I waved my hand, and crossed over the way.

"Don't do that!" cried Mr. Batterbury. "I accept. Give me your address. I'll come to-morrow. Will it include the frame? There! there! it doesn't include the frame, of course. Where are you going now? To the colourman? He doesn't live in the Strand, I hope—or near one of the bridges. Think of Annabella, think of the family,

think of the fifty pounds—an income, a year's income to a prudent man. Pray, pray be careful, and compose your mind: promise me, my dear, dear fellow—promise me, on your word of honour to compose your mind!"

I left him still harping on that string, and suffering, I believe, the only serious attack of mental distress that had ever affected him in the whole course of his life.

Behold me, then, now starting afresh in the world, in the character of a portrait-painter; with the payment of my remuneration from my first sitter, depending whimsically on the life of my grandmother. If you care to know how Lady Malkinshaw's health got on, and how I succeeded in my new profession, I will proceed with my narrative next week.

LOOKING OUT OF WINDOW.

WHAT do the matrons of my acquaintance mean when they say of their servants that they have given, or will give, or must give them a month's warning, because they are giddy girls, whose chief pleasure is looking out of window? I am not subject to giddiness. If I could stand tiptoe on one leg anywhere, I could do so, no doubt, on a tight-rope stretched over the deepest mountain chasm. I am sedate, stout, and far gone in years. What hairs I have, are grey. Nevertheless, few as they are, they would be enough for me to be dragged by with sorrow to the grave, if I depended in my old days, upon British mistresses for maintenance and consolation. Lady Goneril and Mrs. Walter Regan—capital housewives and dear friends—would bewail over me to all their acquaintance and then turn me out of their establishments, if I were Betty Lear, a cook on trial, in place of Dagobert Lear, Esquire, of her Majesty's Customs. I do like looking out of window; and, if I were a part of the establishment either of Mrs. Goneril or Mrs. Regan, that would be my vice. And yet in the (suspected to be) false teeth of Mrs. Regan and of prejudice in general I undertake here to maintain by public thesis against all antagonists, that, limited as the view out of window usually is, there are people with more limited views still, who scorn to contemplate the world beyond it. I maintain, also, that such people deserve to be immured alive in houses glazed with greasy paper, or to vegetate opposite dead walls in unfrequented neighbourhoods.

Mrs. Regan, I may be permitted to observe, sits at the window nearly all day long with her embroidery, and virtuously testifies that she selects such a position only for the sake of a more accurate observance of her stitches. Her miserable stitches—millionth parts of a

worsted parrot, worth in its complete state, I guess, twopence (matrons, forgive me! I'm a bachelor and oldish, and know no better)—she takes credit to say fix her attention, more than the whole spectacle of panting, labouring humanity with which a tenth part of an inch of glass connects her. From which it divides her? No, madam. Glass is a non-conductor, I believe, of something; but of human sympathy glass—window glass—is, to my mind, of all dead conductors the most perfect. The assertion can be proved. I am not sure whether in proving it I may not unavoidably be led to make it clear that, looking out of window, is the noblest occupation of domestic life. But if so, why may we not be glad when it becomes in any house the constant occupation of domestics?

Were I well versed in metaphysics, I should use, no doubt, such terms as objective and subjective, the Ich and the Nicht Ich, in expounding the truths to be laid down. Not being well versed in metaphysics, I must use my vulgar tongue. I must begin the demonstrations as Euclid does, with an axiom or two:—

One.—The eye is the window of the body.

Two.—The window is the eye of the house.

From the eye a man looks out of his raw self; from the window he looks out of his dressed and garnished self, upon the world without.

To begin with the natural eye, the window of the soul—did ever any one abuse a fellow-man or woman for permitting all that lived and worked within to look frequently and earnestly through that? Need I take any trouble to demonstrate that the man who, as to soul or spirit, lives in-doors with his eye-blinds down; who minds only his own affairs, and is never to be seen peeping out with intent gaze and confessed interest at what goes on outside; that such a man is, if nothing worse, a puppy, an ass—humanly speaking, with a due reserve in favour of the better wisdom of real dogs and donkeys. This may be taken for a postulate. In what way do we judge constantly of the respect and love due to the family of thoughts that lives in any one of those perambulating mansions which their owners thatch with straw, or tile with beaver, hang with drapery, and take all pains they can to keep in good repair until the lease expires? Do we not judge by the lights in the windows, and by observing who or what comes—and comes how often—to look out? If such a mansion be inhabited by feelings and opinions constantly abed and keeping down their blinds; or by persons who are so much occupied with their own private enjoyment of themselves and the few sticks of furniture they have acquired, as seldom or never to give a fair and honest peep of interest at what is going on among the neighbours,—that we

know very well is not the sort of thing we can in the least admire.

If we demand of a man that he shall look as much as possible out of his inner case of flesh and blood, why must he not have credit for looking also through his outer case of brick and mortar? I declare boldly that the world, seen under free air, ought to be less interesting to him than the world seen through a window of his house; and here I feel that by metaphysics, if I were but versed in them, I could make good the position in an instant. For the metaphysicians say, I believe that with everything a man sees, his own identity must join itself as part of the perception. What is behind the eye, plus what is before it, go to make all that heart can feel, or brain consider. A natural man, for example, is unable wholly to project himself into a cloud that he perceives, and it is well that he cannot. If he could, he would be sadly mystified. In the same way, a social man is unable wholly to project himself into the phenomena (I feel I am going to be getting scientific) of social life. He looks out of his own social life into the social world by which he is surrounded. Now, let me ask, when is he in a better position for so doing than when he sits by his own fireside? From a foreground of wife, children, personal surroundings, his embodied social state, he looks between his window curtains to the moving spectacle of life beyond. He goes to his window, stands there with his household gods on his right hand and on his left, and sees, through the glass, other men's lives and ways, not darkly.

Thus the social glass—is it extravagant to say?—is not the wine-glass, but the window-pane. Through the latter a true water of life glows all day long for us, older than any cognac, and the best of cordials to those who take it wisely.

Walls richly papered; gorgeous vases; rustling drapery of richest silks; lustres in which lie broods of little rainbows that the mother sunbeams are perpetually darting in and out to feed; radiant piles of mirror, showing self to self, and throwing images at one another; pictures of the best Italian exteriors of saints, or Dutch interiors of beer-shops; Madonnas; cows,—all that can make a lady's chamber a fit casket for the jewel of herself.—What is there, I ask, in one or all of them, worthier of contemplation than the picture which is not a picture only, although curtained, framed, and glazed with but a few square feet of glass,—a few square feet of glass within a frame of gilt or painted deal, and behind that, the world in its own colours, breathing, throbbing, full of latent mysteries and beauties in its light and shade?

What can it matter where the window is? Have you in your chamber framed and glazed a picture of the sea, over which wonderful cloud-shadows flit, and magical effects of light play? Out of the heart of your own

home you look at it, and see the fishermen's boats glancing to and fro, to-day, with their sails glittering like snow-flakes in the sun. To-morrow, your picture has changed. You have a storm-scene; and the wind whistles on one side of the glass; while, on the other side, the fire upon the hearth of home is crackling; the bright glow on the curtains is relieved against the darkness of the leaden mass of cloud beyond, and the cry of a fisherman's wife is to be heard in a lull between the gusts of tempest. The picture in the window-frame speaks to the heart by turns, of pleasure and of labour, of idleness, of love, of despair, and of the heart's deep pain. There is not an hour of a day in which some change in it does not appeal to the snug household within, for sympathy with the joys and sorrows of their race; for reverence and love to Him who holds the waters in the hollow of His hand.

Is there no sea near, and is the picture in the window-frame a country scene of trees and fields; or of a lane, a farm-yard, a hedge bank, and a bit of road? The pictures so framed are the wondrous changes of the seasons, the twittering and flitting to and fro of birds, the changes of effect from sunrise until starlight and moonlight, and the human interest that never flags. If men pass rarely, they are the more to be felt as neighbours and companions in life, when they do pass the lonely house. Upon the poor trampler with a weary son, big as himself sometimes, upon his back; and upon the trampler's wife with her back-load, and her arm-load; both laden more heavily with children than with worldly goods; bowed down under the weight of urgent wants that have no weight at all of means to balance them; upon them, and such as them, the heart may dwell long after they have passed, and think home thoughts out of which wholesome deeds may spring. Neighbours go by; and, were we wiser than we usually are, we should not cease to speculate upon the business they are about. Their movements—all movements of people on the other side the glass—are human problems to be solved on human principles, as pleasant recreation. By working at them in a wise and loving spirit, sympathy may deepen, knowledge widen, and perception become more acute.

In a great town, where it is said no man knows his neighbour, less is to be observed of nature; more of man. It is well not to know one's neighbours; but it is ill not to observe them. Friends and associates are chosen in a great town upon higher grounds than the mere accident of the position of a house; and, if there be no perfectly distinct reason for a personal acquaintance, it is best not to know so much as the names of those persons who live within sight of one's windows. But they should all be studied carefully as problems through the window-pane. But why they, rather than other people? Because they

are there. The views out of window, it should be remembered, are, as to all main features, as distinctly home pictures as the portraits or landscapes on the walls. A certain bit of shore at sea, a certain hillside, village street, or group of London houses; or certain peeps into backyards and London alleys, belong to the house, grow daily more familiar to the eye; and, like any other household property, have to be put to their best use in the establishment.

When a town window glazes a small street scene, the best use to which that scene can be put, is to extract from it a general sense of what it expresses, as a symbol of the world seen from within the walls of home. The occupants of the houses should be watched and cared about as men and women; not as Mr. A. or Mrs. B., so many known persons. They should be regarded as parts of home rather than as expressions of the unknown mass beyond. Of these people we should, I think, take pains to avoid being told any thing specific. We should let their names drop out of our ears, if they get into them by any chance, and call them rather by the numbers of their houses, when we communicate to other members of the household an impression they have made. Watching them in that manner, we can care much about their births, marriages, and deaths; can become strongly interested in them, living, working, loving, erring, shifting out of sight, and giving place to others. The row of homes over the way adds, thus, to the ever-changing problem offered by the stream of people passing up and down the street, not a few of the mysteries attached to men and women gathered in a settled habitation.

Not saying a word more to demonstrate that it is no sign of wisdom to decry the good practice of looking out of window, I shall finish very shortly what I have to say upon this matter. To go back, then, to the two axioms. The eye is the window of the body; the window is the eye of the house. Also to the postulate that a man, whose spirit living in his body never looks out of its windows, must want either worth or wit. But a spirit that looks out may be a bad spirit. The same is true of the eye of the house. It has been said that, through the house-windows we look from home into the world. Therefore, in whatever way we look out of the house-windows, in that way we look out into the world. And this, be sure of it, fathers and mothers!—for I, though but a bachelor, am very sure,—makes looking out of window such a test of character as breathing on a magic mirror used to be sometimes in the old days of the enchanters. Let a child look out of window; and, do you observe the nature of its comments. Upon

the spirit in which it has learnt to regard man, woman, and child, apart from all personal reasons of love or dislike, depends the success of the religious teaching it has had. If it can see in the world of human interest on the reverse side of the glass only stuff for mockery, far worse—because one of the child's guides sent from heaven is a gay spirit of mockery—if it can dwell only upon material which seems to it matter for scorn and censure, which belong in no degree whatever to the right mind of a child; certainly there are dangers threatening its development of heart and soul. When you have taught it to look out of window wisely, to detect matter for kindly sympathy, for praise of many of the unknown people on the other side the glass, for satisfaction in their visible pleasures, regret at their visible trials and hardships; when you have taught it so to construct theories that shall account for observed comings and goings, that it shall always naturally put a genial construction upon acts of which the motive can be only guessed; when you never hear anything in the way of comment harsher than pity for the certainly degraded, and a quick short cry of indignation at the manifestly cruel; when all doubtful problems are solved to the credit of humanity, and good is seen not only wherever manifest, but dragged out of hiding-places among trivial accidents and acts that might pass unconsidered—then be sure that as the child looks out of window, so it looks into the world; and that, by looking out of window, it has learnt no small part of worldly wisdom and religious duty. As this is true of children, so it is true also of men and women. For my own part—let me spoil my test by confessing it—I take a new acquaintance to my Rubens picture, and he talks such sense or nonsense as he can; it matters little whether one or other. I take him to the magic glass, lead him to spend a little of his breath freely about the movements on the other side; and, in an hour I have no indistinct perception whether he is to remain still only an acquaintance, or whether he is to become a friend.

That is my case. If I had children I should teach them to look out of window; and if I had a wife it might be that sometimes when she was looking out of window I should love her best.

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THE ROYAL LITERARY FUND.

EIGHTY years ago or more, a gentleman with many true opinions and some false opinions, but always right-minded in the pursuit of what he believed to be truth and justice, proposed the formation of a Literary Fund to a small club of literary men, who met at the Prince of Wales Tavern in Conduit Street, Hanover Square. This gentleman, whose name was DAVID WILLIAMS, was first an Unitarian preacher, then a schoolmaster, and author of a Treatise upon Education. A writer of warm-hearted (and here and there warm-headed) books and tracts, he was a sympathiser with the French Revolution: and, at one time a fellow-labourer with the Gironde. Madame Roland mentions him in her memoirs as a sincere, able, earnest, honest man. Although he lived when freedom of opinion was not popular in England, and had the misfortune to be included, by a loose poetical bard, in one of Canning's lampoons, among—

Creeping creatures, venomous and low;

nevertheless, David Williams was a hard-working Worthy, ready to move upward, from wrong to right, as he saw opportunity—the very last man in the world to wish to be the founder of a stagnant institution.

A very stagnant institution, commonly known as the Literary Fund, however, claims David Williams for a father. It lives by a routine of its own; it neither stands on the ground he assigned to it at the commencement of its life, nor has it advanced to better things by acting in any accordance whatever with the expressed spirit of its founder, or with the spirit of the times that have succeeded him.

David Williams declared his belief that a community once formed is, in almost every possible circumstance, analogous to an individual; and, as it acquires experience, must use it, determining its nature as it grows, "by the avowal of all sentiments,—good, indifferent, and bad; for," he says, "the community which restrains this avowal is like the man who shuts up some of his senses." The Literary Fund has gone through some remarkable experiences; and, for the last year or two, there have been not a few mem-

bers of its community determinately bent on avowing their experiences, as the first step in the direction of applying them to proper use. In March, every year, and on the twelfth of March, this year, the members of the Literary Fund, founded by David Williams, make their anniversary report to themselves. On this year's occasion an avowal of sentiments opposing its stagnant condition will be made, and will be constantly repeated, until all the lessons of experience shall have been fairly and honestly accepted.

A little of the energy of David Williams himself has to be fetched back from the limbo of lost things, to effect this object. He worked incessantly. His life was one of constant struggle. His wife dying early, he went forth alone into the world, a writer and a teacher; all that was orthodox in Church and State, holding aloof from the contamination of him. When he was toiling painfully for bread, the largeness of his spirit could not be confined within the limits of his own low, narrow state; and, helped by a few more who shared endurance of contempt with him; who shared with him also faith in the hearts of men; he conceived the resolve—for with him the desire was the resolve—of founding an institution that should comfort the poor scholar with help and sympathy in the day of worldly suffering. The same institution would, if developed to the full extent of his desire, come to possess a house, a "common centre of communication and of action" with the power, even, as he said, of supporting "a college for decayed and superannuated genius." His friend Benjamin Franklin doubted his power of achieving anything for the accomplishment of such aims, and so did others; but "I perceive," said Franklin, "that our friend does not acquiesce in our opinions, and that he will undertake this institution. The event, be it what it may, will be honourable to him; but it will require so much time, perseverance, and patience, that the anvil may wear out the hammer." Of perseverance and of patience an endless store was cheerfully spent; and, in due time the humble author, whom no grandee favoured, had collected for his institution a permanent fund of six thousand pounds, and an income of eight hundred pounds a-year. He then made

bold even to ask from the Prince Regent the gift of a house near the palace, and received in reply a grant, not of the house, but of two hundred and thirty-two pounds yearly. This grant expired with the life of George the Fourth, and was then exchanged for the yearly royal contribution of a hundred guineas; that sum being paid by the crown towards the maintenance of this society in common with some other societies. David Williams was, no doubt, glad enough to get a house for nothing; but he never was disposed to spend the young resources of his fund on housekeeping, to the diminution of its power to be helpful to those needing its assistance. At first he hired a room, when it was wanted, for a meeting. Afterwards, when great men—who, while success was doubtful, had discouraged it—came, ostensibly, to lend him the blaze of their names, really, to obtain the credit of connection with an honourable and successful scheme; and when, after a tough opposition from the crown lawyers, an imperfect charter was extorted; Williams himself did all the hard work of the institution. It has, he says, “its apparatus of great officers, councils, and committees; but it has really been formed, and its actual and important business prepared and conducted, principally by its original founder.” A clerk at forty pounds a-year was the sole paid assistant, and there was more business then to be done than now; for the labour of first establishment was going on, and the subscription list (attention to which is now, as we shall see, very costly) was then four times larger than it is at present. In eighteen hundred and two there were within six of four hundred annual subscribers; whereas now, there are only about one hundred: so serious has been the waste of substance, caused by years of affliction under that insidious malady, Routine.

When David Williams died, his work fell into the hands of the “apparatus of great officers, councils, and committees.” This includes under the charter three honorary registrars, all or one of whom shall, according to the rules, attend every meeting to read minutes, orders, letters, and conduct the correspondence of the fund. As there are not a dozen meetings in the year, by a division of this work among themselves, the registrars might do the duties of their office at a cost of little trouble to themselves; of much less trouble certainly than scores of high-minded and influential men would gladly take to do a right and kind thing in a useful way. The society has also three honorary treasurers, who are appointed to receive all moneys and to draw all cheques. Here again there is light labour to divide among the gentlemen who hold these offices, if they might be allowed to do their own work. The help of a clerk at fifty pounds a-year would reduce the work of

the whole six to something scarcely worth considering as work. There are appointed, also, three honorary auditors to examine the accounts. Then there is, of course, a president, and there are vice-presidents; there is a council, and there is a committee. The members of council, as the charter directs, are to be (with the president and vice-presidents) twenty of the most experienced members of the society, “elected out of those members who shall have served for three years upon the general committee;” and if the number of members of council cannot be made up out of the general committee, then the main body of the members are to supply the deficiency. The general committee is to be chosen from among the members; but it is to include a dash of experience in the shape of four gentlemen taken from the council. It is thus evidently meant that the council shall hold the character of the discreeter body in the establishment. Therefore, we do not wonder that the council has been shelved; for certainly, in the management of the Fund for many years past, the word of discretion has been known as nothing but the word of strife. In one respect the directions of the charter never were obeyed. No distinction was preserved between the meetings of the council and those of the committee; both bodies met together; until, in the year eighteen hundred and forty-eight, it occurred to a member of the committee to ask, whether the council could attend committee meetings legally. Counsel’s opinion decided that it could not, and the council was accordingly projected into space. Since that time the council has been but a dead branch on a sickly tree. It fulfils no purpose in existence, except to declare the progress of decay. For the last eight years, the affairs of the Fund have been managed by a general committee only; and this committee recruits itself, once every year, with members of its own choice, named for election on a printed paper called a house list.

Let us not omit to add, as an item in the history, that Mr. Thomas Newton, who died in the year eighteen hundred and seven believing himself to be the last descendant of Sir Isaac Newton, bequeathed to the Literary Fund an estate now worth two hundred pounds a-year, as a compensation for the loss of George the Fourth’s expired grant. The society now receives dividends on stock of the value of little less than thirty thousand pounds, so that it has a fixed income of one thousand and eighty pounds a-year; to which the annual produce of subscriptions and donations, adds about another thousand. It has, therefore, roughly speaking, an income of two thousand a-year.

This sum is intended for the relief of “men of genius and learning,” who fall into distress; and is subject to no necessary charge beyond the cost of a place in which to hold

a committee meeting nine times, and a general meeting once, a-year, the pay of a collector and of a clerk. The clerk, however, can only be requisite in case the three registrars and the three treasurers, and the three auditors make themselves sinecurists. Painters and Engravers, who possess a fund precisely similar, find that, although their committee meets twelve times a-year instead of nine, and relieves more applicants, they can do all needful business by hiring a room at the Freemasons' Tavern when they want it, and by causing their mechanical work to be done through the agency of a clerk who receives fifty pounds for his attention to their affairs once a month. This results from the artists managing their own affairs. The managers of the Literary Fund on the contrary, are not authors, but potent seigneurs. The president is an able and venerable marquis of unblemished honor, worthy of the highest respect in very many capacities, but who is no more an Author than he is the Engineer of the Tubular Bridge, and who associates himself as much with the Society or its proceedings as the Emperor of France does. Of the twenty vice-presidents, eight only can, by the utmost stretch of courtesy, be called literary men, counting those noblemen who have amused themselves by publishing a volume of stray verse, or a book of travel. The council we pass over as a dummy; and, of the nineteen members of committee, certainly not more than four—but, as we think, only two—are authors by profession. There is then no reason for feeling surprise at the necessity imposed by this committee of obliging each applicant for relief to hand in a certificate of character signed by "two respectable householders." The certificate must be sent in seven days before any committee meeting, in order that there may be time to institute inquiry over and above this vouching. Who can possibly wonder, if ladies of genius and learning who have been relieved by a committee so profoundly ignorant of the members of the literary profession as to need such a mode of verification, have been afterwards committed to the treadmill as begging-letter impostors? or if men have been relieved whose books are unknown equally to authors, publishers, and the public?

There must—if only for the credit and ease of noblemen and gentlemen, a few of whom meet nine times a-year for an hour or so each time—be a good house in Bloomsbury—it is indeed going far to condescend even to Bloomsbury—costing one hundred and ninety pounds a-year for rent, coals, servants, and repairs. There must be nothing so mean as a clerk; but there must be a gentleman honourable enough to shake hands with a lord—as indeed there is, and one deserving even higher honours, if such be—who cannot be paid less than two hundred a-year to be a secretary, and to live in the house to take care of it. (Nothing whatever going on in it,

it naturally requires somebody to look after the furniture). Then fifty or sixty pounds may be spent freely on printing, and a hundred and odd pounds at a tavern once a-year; because a dinner makes men liberal, and brings the light of the marquises and right honourables to shine upon the countenances of the authors who adore them. Must we grieve if it has happened that authors have left off adoring lords as lords, and are in this case turned out of their association by the press of patrons whom they do not want? The number of the fraternity has been quadrupled during the last fifty years, and authorship has become a prosperous and definite profession; yet there were, fifty years ago, four times as many periodical subscribers to this Literary Fund as there are now.

The result of this sort of management and mismanagement, speaks for itself in a single sentence. It is ascertained that, in eleven years, the Literary Fund spent five thousand six hundred pounds upon the act of relieving distress in four hundred and seventy-seven cases; while it cost the Artists' General Benevolent Fund in the same time, less than one thousand pounds to relieve a number of people larger by one hundred and forty-seven. The machinery of the Literary Fund, in short, takes forty per cent from its means of usefulness, while those means have themselves been so injured by it, that, instead of a progressive increase of support, its strength has been diminished by the general defection of the literary body.

At the annual meeting of the members of the fund on the fourteenth of March, last year, these facts were pointed out. They were, on that occasion, made the ground of a resolution to the effect that, since such expenses were unreasonable and enormous, some change in the administration of affairs was necessary. The stagnant committee (ceasing to be stagnant for a day, and running in the wrong direction) bestirred itself in opposition to this view of things; and it was decided by a majority of four, that the expenses were not unreasonable and enormous, and that no change was required.

It was next proposed to the same meeting, that a change should be made by electing, as officers and managers of the Literary Fund, literary men by profession—people acquainted, to a considerable extent, with the members of their own body; and by no means needing to be told by two householders who they were; frequently, indeed, not needing to be told by sufferers themselves that they were in distress. It was decided, however, that the Literary Fund did not require literary management, and was immensely better without it.

It was then suggested that there surely was an anomaly in the existence of a council

called in the charter a supreme governing body, which had nothing to take counsel about, and was believed to have no right to meet; and which never did meet, and never could meet—this being the solemn interpretation of its usefulness on which this Fund proceeds. It was proposed, therefore, that the charter should be looked into and reported upon by a sub-committee. That was conceded; and, to an adjourned meeting held on the sixteenth of the succeeding June, this special committee submitted a report, of which all the provisions were, at first, formally rejected. Its recommendations were a simple scheme for the restoration of the functions of the council—a suggestion that, instead of calling upon some afflicted men of genius to make confession of their poverty to the committee, annuities should in some cases be granted, revocable when they ceased to be required. It was suggested as fit also, that many who were not in need of gifts should receive aid by friendly loans, not bearing interest. If the means of repayment did not afterwards arise, the worst that could result would be the conversion of such loans into gifts. Finally, as a secondary matter, it was also suggested, that, since there was to be a large house paid for by the fund, use of it might be allowed to those members who chose to collect books at their own expense in one of its rooms, and to meet each other now and then—still paying the cost themselves—at quiet social conversazioni.

The idea of re-establishing the council was put aside almost without a word. Members of the committee told the meeting that, as to loans, there was a difficulty about recovery in county courts; and that, if money were not lent on security, the committee might calculate on losing their capital. As to the idea of literary men meeting, at their own cost, in a room or two of the house maintained for the Fund to no purpose but that of expense, a Bishop, (one of their condescending patrons) said he knew them better than to believe that anything less than a good dinner would bring authors into harmony. As for a club, if they wanted it, there was the Athenæum; let them wait their seven years for a ballot, and then pay their thirty pounds. "Yes," said a noble lord, another of their condescending patrons; "and if they cannot afford that, there is the Whittington." So the matter was left, only with a pledge on the part of the general committee, that it would before the next meeting, seriously look into the question of granting, occasionally, revocable annuities and loans.

There are persons now living who think that the honour of literature is best to be maintained by its own professors; that the press of England can afford to be contented with its own nobility; and that, if its charitable fund is to be managed by strangers to

its body, it might at least be managed better than it is. These persons will, we are told, be present to say their say at the annual meeting on the twelfth of this month. It may afterwards be well for the public to ask themselves whether, while the expenses of managing the Literary Fund continue to be unreasonable and enormous, and while no distinct plan for reducing them shall be adopted, any further appeal to the public, by anniversary dinner or otherwise, on its behalf is to be accounted justifiable?

We have confined ourselves to the facts of this case, and have abstained from anything like declamation or illustration—though God knows this institution to be such a Satire as it stands, that it is a tempting theme. We do not write anonymously in reference to it, but place the responsibility of our remonstrance upon the name that appears at the head of every alternate page of this journal. We entreat the Public to consider what this institution is; what it spends; and what it does. We ask all readers of books—whether as painful students, or in the cultivation of the graces of life, or in search of wholesome relief from care, sickness, or monotony—to be careful how they are deluded into the belief that they can possibly show their gratitude to those who instruct them, or beguile them of their miseries, by sanctioning these misuses of a large certain annual income, and these perversions of the project of a working literary man. We have little need to call upon those who follow Literature as a profession and object to lay it under the feet of any knot of great men or small men, to keep aloof from the Royal Literary Fund until it reforms itself; for (as we have shown) they are a mere exceptional drop or two in the stagnant water of its mismanagement, and are as a class, the last class supposed to be comprehended under the title, "The Royal Literary Fund incorporated by Royal Charter."

ENGLISH HOTELS.

I HAVE already striven to set down the chief characteristics, outward and inward of foreign hotels.* When we are told that we have so much to learn from them, and that no more praiseworthy models could be offered for our guidance, it is meet at least that we should know what they are really like; where lie their exemplary excellences, where their most notable defects. There are more Poll Parrots in the world than are to be found in brass wire-work cages. We are but too glad to save ourselves the trouble of thinking for our selves, by appropriating and repeating the thoughts and dicta of other people. No doubt there were many things much better managed in France than in England when the Sentimental Traveller gave to the

* In pages 97, 141, and 148 of the present Volume.

world his travelling experiences; yet I am of opinion that there are some few things we can manage in our own way, and in our own land, with no indifferent success, and in whose management we need not cede to our continental neighbours.

I will first put up at Jalabert's first-class inn.

Jalabert's is designed for the accommodation of The Superior Classes. What free-born Briton's frame is free from a tingle of respect, admiration, pride, when he hears the term Superior Classes? That a duke, a lord, a baronet, a bishop—a superior class man, in a word—should be content to leave the Assyrian magnificence of his half-dozen town and country palaces even for a season, and put up at a mere hotel, is in itself an act of such condescension and abnegation of self, that the least we can do is to have a Jalabert's to receive him, and that it should be well and universally understood that Jalabert's is devoted to the reception of the superior classes, and of those only—not of the *profanum vulgus*.

Now Jalabert's, the great London hotel for the superior classes, is situated in Purple Street, Flaxen Square; which, as all men know, is within two hundred and fifty miles of Old Bond Street. It was originally an old, cooped-up, inconvenient, George the Second House, which was the bachelor residence of the well-known Claribel Claribel, Esquire, a great friend of Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, a member of parliament for my Lord Mintoncomyn's borough of Heeltap, and assistant Commissioner of Lunacy for the liberty of St. Kits—which last snug little sinecure brought him in just nineteen hundred pounds a-year. On the lamented demise of Mr. Claribel, which occurred one day, in consequence of a surfeit of mushroom patties and Maraschino, as he was stepping into his chair at White's, after winning a few hundreds at E. O. of Mr. Selwyn; his mansion in Purple Street became the property, by testamentary bequest, of the *Sieur Dominique Jalabert*, formerly of the *Canton des Grisons*, his attached hairdresser and valet-de-chambre. Dominique turned the place into an hotel, and prospered exceedingly. Although a foreigner, he manifested a decided predilection for guests of the English nation; and, at the epoch of the Great French Revolution and emigration, discouraged the patronage of the superior classes of the continent. He made an exception, indeed, in favour of the Prince Truffeibert de Perigord Dindon, who had adroitly escaped from France before the confiscation, had sold all his estates for cash, and had brought away all the family jewels sewn up in his wife's brocades. Of the friendship and countenance of this noble émigré Jalabert constantly boasted. He would have been glad for him to stay years in his hotel, because the most elevated members of the British aristocracy condescended to play hazard with

the prince; nevertheless Jalabert seized the boxes of the Cardinal Duke de Rohan Chambertin for the amount of his bill, and locked up poor Monsieur le Chevalier de Rastificolis in the Marshalsea for a similar reason.

At the peace of eighteen hundred and fourteen, however, a sudden change came over the spirit of Dominique Jalabert's dream. He suddenly conceived a profound and enthusiastic affection for foreigners—superior foreigners. He was proud to accommodate allied sovereigns. He doated on ambassadors. A Hetman of the Don Cossacks was his delight. Not a strong politician ordinarily, he believed fanatically in the Holy Alliance; and his fanaticism culminated into idolatry when a Holy Ally travelled with a large suite, and sent a courier on before him to order a suite of apartments.

It was at this time that Dominique bought the freehold of Lord Pyepoodle's house, next door to the right; subsequently adding to it, to meet his increasing hotel requirements, old Mr. Pillardollar the banker's house, next door to the left, and lastly, the roomy mansion of Lord Chief Justice Trippletree (afterwards raised to the peerage under the title of Baron Hampshire) round the corner. The original Jalabert died immensely rich, about five and twenty years ago. Latterly he wore a wig and a shirt-frill, and was quite a respectable man; indeed it is said that he never recovered the shock of the death of the Emperor Alexander. His son, Castlereagh Pitt Jalabert, Esq., lives at a park in Somersetshire, rides to hounds, and is high sheriff. I should not at all wonder if the next heir were created a baronet, and the family name Anglicised into Jollybird.

Messrs. Salt and Savoury are the present proprietors of Jalabert's. S. and S. are also landlords of the F. M. Prince Albert, close to the North Polar Railway Station; the Grand Pagoda Hotel (formerly the Brown George) at Brighton; the Mulligatawny House, at Cheltenham; the Benbow and Badminton at Greenwich; and the Kehama Hotel, at Windermere. Salt and Savoury belong to the great consular hotel-keeping families, who have their caravanserais all over England, and whose names there should be a Sir Bernard Burke to register. Jalabert's, their great London hotel, has grown from Claribel Claribel's two-storeyed hencoop-looking bachelor residence, into an immense establishment. It is six houses rolled into one. The streets on which it looks are narrow and gloomily genteel; its brick walls are dingy and smoke-blackened; its windows dark and diminutive; but its vastness is untold. When I lose myself accidentally in the labyrinthine regions of Flaxen Square, or take a solitary walk there, to air myself in the regions of aristocracy, I look with awe and trembling on Jalabert's. It has so many doors. It seems so proudly contemptuous of the struggles and exertions

of new hotels that strive to push themselves into notice and patronage, by show architecture and newspaper puffs. JALABERT'S, on a tarnished brass plate; that is all you see,—the place might be a doctor's or a solicitor's; but ah! what patrician grandeur there is in that reserved waiter on the doorstep, the portly man with the large whiskers who calmly picks his teeth (he has turtle every day, I am sure) and half closes one eye to look at the street-scape as though it were a glass of generous port. I wonder, when I look at him, whether he powders his hair to wait on an ambassador, and whether he brings in dinner in a court suit, and with a sword by his side.

Jalabert's is dear, enormously dear. What else can be expected. A traveller sojourning at such an hotel, acquires a sort of collateral interest in the peerage, the diplomatic service, the maintenance of our institutions, and the divine right of kings. He who stays at Jalabert's is tacitly recognised by the establishment as a Nob, and the dignity is charged for in the bill. They would perform ko-tou there to the Emperor of China; they would burn incense to the Grand Llama of Thibet; they would light the pipe of the Great Sachem of the Blackfoot Indians; they would even sacrifice a junior partner to Juggernaut; but they would charge for it in the bill. There is nothing unattainable at Jalabert's. There are bills in the books, I dare say, running "His Highness Hokeypokeywankeyfum: Jan, the thirteenth,—cold boiled middle-aged gentleman, eighteen guineas; baked young woman, twenty pounds and sixpence; baby en papillottes, five pounds five;" or "His Holiness the Pope [he was at Jalabert's incog. as the Bishop designate of Hylogiopotamus in partibus infidelium] Baldaquin, eight pounds; paid for triple crown (packing, wadding, and box), ninety-seven pounds three; embracing toe (four times), fifty pounds." Such things must be paid for. Honours, glories, adulations, incense, ko-tous, toe-kissing are expensive articles. You must have a Jalabert's for such luxuries, even as you have strawberry-leaves, gold sticks, stoles, and dog-latin rolls of King Richard the Second for peers, a bald-headed man in spectacles at eight hundred a-year to hold up the tail of the Right Honourable the Speaker of the House of Commons, and eight cream-coloured horses to draw the Queen's coach.

A housemaid who had once taken service at Jalabert's told me that the internal arrangements of Jalabert's are splendid beyond compare. There are the largest looking-glasses in the sitting-rooms that ever were seen; only the apartments are so small and dark, that those vast mirrors are lost in obscurity, and waste their sweetness on the dingy air. The passages are all thickly carpeted. The service of plate is of enormous value. You dine there off silver and Sèvres,

and Dutch and damask. You may have an épergne, if you like, to yourself. Every refinement of luxury, every item to the most infinitesimal of comfort you may, and do have. The head-waiter—I beg pardon—the groom of the chambers—is a funded gentleman, and has a villa, with a conservatory, at Mitcham. Wealth, pride, dignity, dulness, noiselessness, and secresy, distinguish Jalabert's.

Jalabert's is not for you or me, my brother. It is as far beyond our reach as the entrée at St. James's, or as a seat in the royal pew at church. I question even if a man having twenty thousand a-year, not being a Nob, could have the moral courage to drive to Jalabert's. His voice would falter as he ordered apartments; he would call the waiter Sir, and the groom of the chambers would very probably say to him, "My good man, it really appears to me that you must have made some mistake." Then he would drive away, crestfallen and mortified, to Euston Square or Paddington. Why the very boots at Jalabert's must be a Nob. The boots! he must be called the Hoby, or the Patent Leathers, surely. He never whistles or hisses while he polishes. He wears a white neckcloth, and reads the St. James's Chronicle, perhaps. The only way for the plebeian to be enabled to enjoy Jalabert's costly and exclusive hospitality seems to me to be this. Emigrate to America. Make a fortune. Renounce your allegiance, and become an American citizen. Get made, or make yourself, a General of militia, a member of Congress, or a secretary of legation. Then come boldly across the Atlantic in the first-class cabin; arrive at Jalabert's with a profusion of portmanteaux, and despatch-boxes, and you will be received with open arms and ledgers. You may loaf in its lordly sitting-rooms, you may whittle its carved fauteuils, you may soil its Turkey carpets, you may call the groom of the chambers Hoss, and the landlord Boss; and the housemaids, Helps; you may smoke in the corridors, and order gin-slugs in the coffee-room. But do not mistake me; do not imagine that it is in the power of dollars, almighty as that power is, to enable you to do this. You go to court, your name is in the Morning Post; you dine at the Legations; you are a member of the Travellers' Club; lords call upon you; viscountesses invite you to their parties, although you are an American, a democrat, and your ancestor may have been an Irish hodsman, a German tailor, or an English convict, you are a Nob. This is the secret. But let Raffaele Sanzio, Esq. painter, or William Shakspeare, player, and member of the Dramatic Author's Society; or Tycho Brahe, astronomer (assuming them to be in life among us) let them, granting them amplest means for paying their bills, seek accommodation at Jalabert's. I warrant the groom of the chambers would look

askant at them, and that the waiters would turn up their noses at having to wait on "profeshnal pipples."

Let Jalabert's flourish. I have no call to wince at its high charges—my withers are unwrung: its upper chambers even are not for those of my degree. As for its darkness and narrowness and gloominess, the Nobs doubtless prefer those elements to democratic light and height and space. Bless me! don't people live in the stable-yard of St. James's Palace? Don't the pokey little houses in the purlieus of Spring Gardens fetch fabulous rents? The Nobs like holes and corners. They make Her Majesty ride in a coach above a hundred years old, and in danger of tumbling to pieces with rottenness. Abolish that coach, and build her a neat, airy, springy vehicle in Long Acre at your peril. The British constitution is at stake. There would be a revolution to-morrow.

The second most notable London hotel is the family, or private hotel in Jermyn Street, St. James's Street, or Piccadilly. Smawkington's hotel is a very nice hotel of these two classes mixed. Smawkington's is not exactly in Jermyn Street, but in Little Great Boot-tree Street close by. It is the snuggest, warmest, quietest, yet cheerfullest little hotel you can imagine. When I say little, I mean compact, tight, cosy. There is not an inch of boarding to be seen about the house. All is carpeted, oil-clothed, matted. I wonder they don't carpet the doorstep. The house is as clean as a new pin. The housemaids and chambermaids are all rosy and all good-looking. The housekeeper is a beauty. The cook belongs to a glee-club, and cooks you blithe, wholesome, cheerful, honest-hearted dinners, that make you eat a great deal but never gives you an indigestion. I should like very much indeed to marry the young lady who sits book-keeping in the comfortable-bar; not because she is Smawkington's only daughter, and has a pretty penny to her fortune—I repudiate such mercenary motives with disdain—but for the sake of her bright eyes and her rosy lips and her silver laugh. I don't think Smawkington would give her to me, though; inasmuch as he declares her to be the apple of his eye. Smawkington is bald, corpulent, sleek, and black-broadclothed. His wife is pious, bony, genteel, interested in missionary enterprises, and condemns the duties of domesticity. Mr. S. is not unlike a duke, or the chairman of a select vestry, or an undertaker in flourishing circumstances. He wears a signet-ring, and keeps a mail Phaeton; under which there runs a plum-pudding dog of the Danish breed, quite in the Hyde Park style. Of the wines at Smawkington's—the famous ports, the peculiar clarets, and the noted sherries—I have heard that they will make a cat speak; but I know, for certain, that they will make a man merry. Look you here, Mr. Albert Smith. When the ruddy curtains are drawn,

and the crystal sparkles on the sideboard, and the ruby and golden contents of the decanters gleam on the table; when the fat little port-wine glasses are filled, and the filberts are in the vine-leaf dessert plate, and the almonds and raisins are at hand, and the candles are lighted and the fire trimmed—then is the time to confess that all is not barren that cometh out of England, and that your nut and your wine, partaken of with all the accessories of English comfort in an English family hotel, can compete with, if they do not surpass, the splendour of the great French *salle-à-manger*, or the tinselled ornateness of the cabinet particulier, with its long-necked array of sour beverages. I like to see my wine. I would rather have an aldermanic decanter of handsomely-cut glass, and the red sea of jollity gleaming within it, than a lanky flask of green glass, besmeared with hideously-coloured sealing-wax, and tilted in a basket like a go-cart. Faultless family-dinners take place at Smawkington's. You may smell the good things as you pass; there is no ostentation—no show—no noisy gongs clanging: but all is substantial, respectable, comfortable, cosy, English.

The most constant guests at Smawkington's appear to me to be bishops and rich old ladies. Other members of the dignified clergy, and other old ladies occasionally frequent it; but the real, complete bishop—gaiters, apron, shovel-hat, and all, seems the pontifex maximus of Smawkington's. You may see his cob at the hotel-door every morning, in waiting for his grave ride about Whitehall and Downing Street. The rich old lady, too, arrives from Devon or Somerset in a travelling-carriage. She has ladies'-maids, companions, lap-dogs, confidential male servants and orphan protégés. Frequently she has a bevy of long-ringed, sea-green-skirted daughters; sometimes a niece. She has rackety rapid young country squires or desperate guardsmen also appertaining unto her as nephews. But, for them, Smawkington's is a vast deal too slow. They hang out, as they call it, at vivacious hosteleries in the noisy part of Piccadilly, or in Covent Garden Piazza or Charing Cross. They drive up to Smawkington's in tearing cabs, or ride up on rampagious horses. They have grave grooms and impudent little tigers. They come to see the old lady; they flirt with the sea-green-skirted daughters, and scandalise the reputable waiter by demanding brandy and soda-water at unreasonable hours in the morning.

Smawkington's cannot—candour obliges me to acknowledge it—be called a cheap hotel. It is dear, but not extortionate. Nor is it unapproachable to the democracy, like Jalabert's. The modest democrat can stop there, and need not ruin himself; and I can honestly state, that I can find in London many other hotels as comfortable and well-conducted.

The chief objections to and grounds for denunciation of English hotels seem to be these: First, as to the performance of that seemingly simple operation, washing your hands. You ring for the waiter, who says, "Hands, sir?—yes, sir!" and goes away. Then you ring again. Then at last you are introduced to a chambermaid, who, after a tedious journey up-stairs and down-stairs, conducts you to a bed-room, where she draws the bed-curtains and pulls down the blinds—not because such is wanted, but from mere mechanical habit. Then you are left to your own devices, with some hard water that would curdle the soap if it would dissolve; but you might as well wash with a piece of chalk as with the singularly-hard white cake in the soap-dish. There is one towel, damp and hard, like a piece of embossed pasteboard; and with these aids you may make what toilet you may, and then come out to find the attendant waiting for her fee at the door.

The next nuisance is having to pay what you please to servants, without a fixed charge in the bill. Even commercial men have generally a tariff of their own (it is threepence a meal), but they will tell you themselves that they are puzzled at times to know what to do. If such be the case, what must it be with mere tourists and visitors, when the donation received by one waiter with smiles and thanks, is sulkily carried away by another without a word, or with a muttered question of "Whether it includes the 'Boots'?"

A real grievance is wax candles; but a grievance, as we have seen, not confined to English hotels. Mr. Albert Smith is peculiarly sore upon the point, having been made first to burn them and then to pay heavily for them at all sorts of places. When he is at home he does not burn wax candles, and sensibly makes bold to say that the majority of his readers do not: they are content with Price or Palmer, or a modérateur lamp, or better still, with gas. He recommends travellers not to have private rooms unless they see that gas has been introduced into them. There is something so enormously comic and absurd in a stranger at an hotel sitting down alone in a cheerless room with two grim wax candles burning before him in dreary solemnity, that he must be a dull fellow indeed who would not laugh outright at this melancholy little bit of state; if it were not for the annoyance we all feel at having useless expense thrust upon us.

Whenever Mr. Albert Smith sees pictures of Pulling up to Unskid, or Down the Road, or The Salisbury Rumbler meeting the Exeter Delay upon Easterly Common, he is sure that, in the room decorated with such pictures, wax candles are made to burn at the Pope only knows how much an inch; for these extortions—it is the only proper word—chiefly occur in the hotels that were great in those

days of misery, the fine old coaching times. Of the coaching times and coaching inn our pamphleteer has a fierce horror. Years ago he avowed that the writer who tried to invest an inn with an idea of picturesque comfort (I have sinned in that way myself more than once, woe is me!), made a great mistake: and so, he says, have all those who, in the sturdiest traditional spirit, still believe or make believe they believe so. Light and warmth after a cold night's journey make an inn comfortable; so would be a brick-kiln or a glass house, or a blacksmith's forge under similar circumstances. But the feeling at arriving at an inn in the day-time, when you know you have to stay there, is to him irresistibly depressing. Have you never had the blues, O Reader, in some gloomy hotel at Rotterdam on a wet day, with a prospect of a fog in the afternoon and a frost to-morrow? The utter isolation in the midst of bustle is bad enough; but everything, according to the lively explorer of the Bernese Oberland, makes it worse in an English hotel. The chilling sideboard, with its formal array of glasses; the thorough Swiss of the household, whose services can only be procured by paying for them; the empty teacaddy and backgammon board; the utter absence of anything to beguile even two minutes, beyond a local directory, a provincial journal of last Saturday, or Pater-son's Roads; the staring, unfeeling pattern of the paper, and, in the majority of country places, the dreariness of the look-out; the clogged inkstand and stumped pens; the inability to protract a meal to six hours to get rid of the day; and, above all, the anticipations of a strange bed, with curtains you cannot manage, and pillows you are not accustomed to, and sheets of unusual fabric—all these discomforts keep him from ever falling into that rampant state of happiness at an inn which popular delusion would assign to a sojourn therein. This is a truthful picture—a daguerreotype of inn-dulness, but is it not also true of the very liveliest—so long as they are strange all over Europe, all over the world. A man may travel from Dan to Beersheba and find all barren. Wet weather, cold, solitude in a crowd, ill-health, bad spirits, will make Naples or Genoa as horribly dull as Shepton Mallet or Market Rasen.

Neither can our friend sleep comfortably in that grand old temple of suffocation and night-mare, the four-post-bedstead; although this is one of the fine and ancient institutions which it is the glory of England to cling to. Originally constructed in the dark ages, when doors and windows would not close and chimneys were blast furnaces, and space was no object, it has come down to us in all its original, imposing, hearse-like, presence—shorn only of its surmounting plumes of dusty feathers, which may yet be seen in some old places gloomily

brushing the ceiling. Why it so happens that, in the conventional hotel, the smaller is the room the larger is the four-poster, it is impossible to explain. Within the heavy, expensive, elaborate mass of serge, clintz, feathers, mahogany, horsehair, sack-ing, holland, ticking, quilting, winch-screws, brass rings, and castors and watchpockets, the hapless traveller rolls about in vastness, and swelters, and gasps, and breathes the same uncirculating air over and over again, and before he ventures into it, it is even at times asked "if he will have a pan of coals?" Without the bed, his toilet operations are necessarily confined to cabin-like space. There is no table to put anything on, nor is there any room for one. Sitting in such a cribbed chamber is out of the question, and so he has no choice between the coffee-room, and the gaunt, stark, expensive private apartment, where the old waiter makes him an assenting party to all the old tomfoolery of burning two old wax candles, in two old plated heavy candelabra rather than candlesticks, after which it is possible the old chambermaid sends him to his old bed with an old mutton dip without snuffers.

In the country town hotel, the coffee-room was a ghastly place. There was no gas; but some mould candles were burning about with cocked hat wicks, and their light was all absorbed by the dingy paper. The only pictures were of the old coaching school, with that dull, half-animal clod, the Jehu (as writers of the Pierce Egan school used to call him), tooling the prads along a road at a rate they never achieved. There was a dusty old stuffed pheasant in a glass case over the door; a looking-glass over the mantel-piece, divided into sections, that put each side of your head on a different level if you got between them, making your face look as if it were going up-stairs; a number of dark old tables, indented with knocks of presidents' hammers and freemasons' glasses; and a couple of long, old-fashioned bell-pulls of scarlet stuff edged with black, which came down bodily when you pulled them. On a thin, bygone sideboard were some old, battered, plated cruet-stands and egg-cups—always with the copper coming through; and an ancient toastrack of the same fabric—one of those you can only see at sales. A nipped old lady presided in the bar; the waiters had the air of old curates who had tried to better themselves by taking to the hotel business; the boots was permanently bent with carrying portmanteaus up and down stairs, and the chambermaid had attended on Queen Charlotte when she changed horses there. They had all lived at this inn without changing one of its arrangements, until they had allowed the world to ride past in an express train, and finally away from them.

We are comforted, after all, with an ominous rumour that, even just at present, a large hotel is contemplated in London. If

well conducted it must (so we are told) return a fortune to the shareholders. The attention of readers and of the public is directed to a summing up of one or two changes which the travelling world will appreciate. First and again, a fixed and moderate charge for attendants. Secondly, Bedrooms on the continental plan, in which the inmates can sit if they please without being driven to the melancholy extortion of the grim "private room." Thirdly, Something beyond "chop, sir, steak, boiled fowl," for dinner. Fourthly, The entire abolition of wax candles, coffee equipage, and the whole service of battered regular-old-established-English-hotel plated dishes with the copper showing through. Fifthly, Civil, quick, appreciative waiters; not anomalous people between mutes and box-keepers. Sixthly, An office for general information or complaint, with responsible persons always therein. Seventhly, and lastly, The recognition of the presence of ladies in the coffee-room, as in the foreign *salle-à-manger*.

Many, indeed all, of these suggestions are pregnant with good sense; and I am sure that their adoption would lead to increased comfort, convenience, and cheapness in our English hotels. But I do not go the complete and whole animal in denouncing them. We have much to reform, much to improve, much to remodel; but entire destruction of our hotel edifice I would respectfully deprecate. I am of opinion that, in a vast number of instances, we might go much further abroad and fare immeasurably worse. Bad attendance, incivility, discomfort, useless parade, and extortion, have their home elsewhere than in England. I have been in as many foreign hotels as most men, and—wo is me—I know it. The best plan to adopt, and one that would produce a new and bright era in the management of hotels, would be to take the best part of each system—French, German, Swiss, and American—and graft them on to our own. To hotels conducted by companies I do, and must always dissent. I do not in the least object to joint-stock companies building, furnishing, and founding large hotels: for, if properly and comprehensively commenced, hotels are gigantic enterprises, and it is only by association of capital that they can be established. But their after-management must be confided to some entrepreneur, whose fortune, credit, knowledge, and reputation are at stake in the management thereof; and not to a hired servant, whose salary is punctually paid whether the hotel be well or ill-conducted. The Pavilion Hotel at Folkestone was begun by a company; the Great Western Hotel belongs to a company; the Granton Hotel near Edinburgh was built by a company; but they are all underlet; and, if we except scarcely-avoidable and exceptional short-comings, better conducted hostelries do not exist in Great Britain. I am no tory, Heaven knows, but

I am conservative enough strenuously to desire the retention of the Landlord as an institution.

FEUDAL FETTERS FOR FARMERS.

In the north of England dwells the Duke of Norman Land, possessor of an historic name, and of estates almost equal in joint extent to a moderate-sized county. This duke has always borne the character of a kind landlord, more intelligent, too, in the management of his estates than dukes generally are; for, to tell the plain truth, it is very difficult for a great peer, who seldom hears a disagreeable truth, who is surrounded by narrow-minded lawyers, subservient agents, and humble tenants, to learn what is both his real interest and his duty in the management of his property.

A too common landlord-like feeling was put in words by a lordly lawyer agent when he exclaimed, in a moment of candour, after an agricultural dinner at which some tenants had spoken out in a fashion becoming daily more common—"I hate your intelligent farmers; they are so deuced independent." This sentiment was actually brazened out the other day, by a military and landed earl, who dismissed a gentleman and brother officer from his stewardship for not treating him with "proper respect." We may imagine how a farmer would have fared if he had dared to remonstrate against any agricultural ukase, however foolish and unjust, of this haughty landlord.

But our duke was less spoiled by the perpetual kou tou prostrations of his dependents than might have been expected. He had, among his thousand tenants, one of whom he was proud; and not without reason, for he was an admirable farmer, an example to the whole estate, and a farmer, also, whose name was quoted, through the district wherein he dwelt, with honour by brother farmers. The duke, like a good man and wise landlord, gives a prize for the best farm, to be awarded by first-class agricultural judges. In one thousand eight hundred and fifty-five, our model farmer—Netherwell we will call him—gained the prize; and his crops of roots received special commendation. With the prize came a letter from the duke, written in very handsome terms: a letter, which the Netherwell family will, perhaps, treasure and prize almost as much as a letter from their sovereign. Indeed the duke is almost a king in the north.

But mark what follows:—The duke, or his agents, or his lawyers, prepared a new form of lease for the tenants of the Norman Land estate. Netherwell the model farmer's term being out, he has a copy sent him—not for his consideration or suggestions—not to learn his opinions, or to obtain the advantage of his large experience and scientific knowledge of the subject the

lease was meant to regulate; but to sign without note or comment, absolutely, positively, or to leave his farm; the farm that he had brought to the perfection that won him the duke's prize and letter.

When the tenant came to read the duke's lease, he found it was, in effect, a bond giving himself up to be ruined whenever the duke, or the duke's successor, or the duke's agent, or the duke's any one else who had the duke's ear, chose to enforce the rules and penalties there set down. He was bound to a course of cultivation that was most unprofitable; he was forbidden to do that which was essential if he continued to grow first-rate root crops; he was hedged in with pains and penalties; and, finally, was bound to submit all doubts, disputes, and objections on final appeal, to the great man's great man the duke's agent.

Mr. Netherwell made a first experiment and appealed to the duke's agent. That of course proved vain, and he then wrote to the duke a very closely-reasoned, logical, and yet pathetic letter; protesting against putting his ruin under his own hand and seal in any man's hands, and begging for an interview. The interview was granted; but the great duke had only one word—Sign! and one alternative,—Sign or leave!

Under these circumstances, Mr. Netherwell, as lawyers say, threw himself upon the country, and appealed to the opinion of his fellow tenant-farmers. They answered his appeal by a subscription, a testimonial; a golden protest against the folly of landlords teaching such farmers as Netherwell their business. There the matter for the present ends; but we hear a rumour, which we trust for the duke's sake may be true, that he has yielded to common sense; that the offensive clauses have been struck out; that the lawyers and agents are to eat humble-pie; and the farmer is to keep his land.

We hope he will have the hearty sympathy of the beef and bread eaters, the housekeepers of England, in any case. Town-dwellers, who get meat from the butcher's, or bread from the baker's, take very little interest in the tenants of the soil, and sometimes, for want of knowing better, talk of the farmer as a sort of wild animal, preserved for the pleasure and dignity of the lords of the land, and of no more substantial value to the state than so many gamekeepers. At least, that is the only rational construction which can be put upon the speeches of distinguished orators a few years ago, when they talked with favour of England becoming a sort of manufacturing Heligoland, dependent on neighbouring states for every grain of corn and ounce of meat. Although those who ever think about the question now know better, still apathy so far prevails, that the tenant-farm population; the beef and mutton, the bread and butter manufacturers—have less sympathy and assistance than

any other class in their isolated struggles to free themselves from galling trammels, obsolete customs, and most discouraging leases.

The experience of the last few years has taught us, that after commerce and enterprise have done their best in the old and new world, the comfortable sustenance of the British population will mainly depend on the rational cultivation of the land of the British islands. When we have done our best at home in raising corn and grain, we still want many a ship-load from abroad; but all that the favourable sun and soil of foreign lands can spare, will still leave a large vacuum to be filled by that stout subject, the British farmer.

It is, therefore, the plain interest of every customer for what the French call, expressively, *comestibles*, that every acre of British ground should produce as much corn, roots, meat, butter and cheese, as will pay for the cost of growing. How is this to be done? The expedients of bonuses, premiums, and protective duties, have been fairly tried and wisely abandoned as unjust and inefficient. What is wanted, then, to enable the farmer to do his best, and the farm-land to produce the most? Clearly, a landlord with intelligence enough, and capital enough, to let his land with all the materials or plant for the best style of cultivation; and a tenant with intelligence enough to provide and use the livestock, the implements, the manures, and the seeds, to set the farm to work to manufacture animal and vegetable food with the help of the finest machinery provided by the landlord.

Let us imagine, that the landlord and the tenant, and the farm, are all what they ought to be for making the most profit out of the most produce, still there is one element wanting, without which no wise farmer—no farmer who has anything to lose, will sink his seeds and manures in the soil, or invest his cash in the livestock that make the glory of good farming.

That element is security of tenure. Three removes, according to good housewives, are as bad as a fire. If that be the case with pots, pans, and pianos; what must it be with farm stock and implements! It is not difficult for the most unlearned in rural matters to imagine, what it must be with rotation of crops, the fourfold, fivefold, or sixfold system, by which each crop prepares the land for a successor of a different kind, and by which the whole cultivation is incomplete until wound up by the last crop, as, for instance, on the sand land of Bedfordshire: first, turnips; second, barley; third, clover; fourth, wheat, the wheat bringing the farmer home for the balance of cost of the three preceding crops.

After this technical, but indispensable explanation, our non-rural readers will be surprised to learn that, at an agricultural gathering in the city of a great agricultural county, a gentleman of influence in

agricultural management gravely proposed a model agreement for the county based on an annual tenure; gravely proposed that the best farmers (for to a model standing agreement accepted by a county no tenant dare object) shall settle and sink capital on land—say to the extent of the maximum of ten pounds sterling an acre—on the risk that a death, a contested election, a quarrel with the landlord's gamekeeper, or a hasty word maliciously reported from a market-dinner (all common cases) may send him on his travels to seek another farm, with the poor compensation of a contested arbitration for unexhausted improvements.

The author of this model agreement is, of course, a lawyer. It is intended "to give a stimulus to agricultural improvement" by a written agreement for a year's tenancy. Just the sort of stimulus, we should say, that the presence of a police officer in every street gives to industry, gratitude, temperance, beneficence, and the other active virtues. "There," said a great sugar-baker to us one day, showing a sheet of letter-paper, "are the terms on which I have bought thirty thousand pounds' worth of sugar. If a lawyer had settled the agreement, he would have filled a chest with papers, raised a hundred doubts and difficulties, and laid the foundation of a dozen suits in trying to prevent me and the importer from robbing each other." Therefore we say emphatically that the lawyer should be the last person to be consulted in an agricultural agreement, and then solely for the form; the substance can only be usefully settled by agricultural experience.

So thought apparently Mr. I. T. Danson, who appears not to share the feelings of awe and dread which silence his fellow farmers of Cheshire in the presence of a lawyer land-agent. He ventured to canvass the attorney's agricultural agreement in the columns of a local paper, and has since republished his letter in a pamphlet well worth the consideration of landlords who prefer trusting their land to intelligent, improving, independent tenants with capital, rather than to the ignorant, subservient serfs.

Judging from the cool, curt reply of the lawyer land-agent, to a very polite communication from the tenant farmer, it is considered a great liberty for a tenant farmer in Cheshire to do more than touch his hat to the agent and pay his rent when he can!*

With the cardinal blunder of a tenancy from year to year we might leave this scheme of agricultural improvement, which one farmer only dared to object to at a public meeting with a landlord in the chair, and not one ventured to discuss in the committee appointed to consider it. But on a bread and cheese question, even at the risk of fatiguing our non-agricultural friends, we

* Agriculture in Cheshire: Five Letters from a Tenant Farmer, on Farmers' Agreements.

must go a little further, and show how seriously the manufacturer of British food will be checked if those tenants (farmers who really understand the importance of a sound system of tenancy) from timidity or apathy leave the question in the hands of the red-tape routinists of the legal profession; in the hands of lawyers excelling in forging fetters for rogues, detecting flaws, and pursuing debtors, but perfectly innocent of the simple means required to develop intelligence and enterprise in agricultural pursuits by letting tenants alone. This land-agent is not content with prescribing a model of cultivation to which no independent farmer would submit; of forbidding absolutely the cultivation of certain profitable crops, and taxing the tenant over and above his rent with the cartage of materials for repairs of the landlord's buildings, with other clauses equally offensive to the best class of tenants, but he devotes a series of clauses to apportioning the compensation the tenant from year to year shall receive if he is so silly as to make drains, hedges, roads, and farm-buildings, or other works which it is the part of a landlord to provide, as of the farmer to find implements for his labourers. The proportion assigned being about seventy-five per cent under the real value, and the intention being evidently to transfer from the shoulders of the landlord to tenant on most unfair terms, the execution of the permanent improvement of the land; for the model lease under consideration gives the tenant seven years as the value of drains, which parliament estimates to the landlord at twenty-two.

When the feudal tenure prevailed, the grant of land was a favour, and rent was the smallest part of the consideration. There are estates where the feudal feeling still prevails, and where the landlord is willing to take a rent less than the value of the land for the sake of political influence. There, improvements, clean enclosures, and high farming are not to be expected; and such a landlord may be a very kind man, but is certainly no patriot.

There are other estates where the general intelligence of the tenants is of so low an order—where they are so ignorant and so prejudiced, that they are not as a body to be trusted with a lease. We have known such tenantry in Cheshire and Lancashire, in Wales, in Kent and in Surrey. For, although a lease is a great security for a good tenant, it is no protection against a bad one. In such districts the landlord must make each tenancy the subject of a separate bargain, agree for each tenant's improvement, and only grant leases where he can trust the man, knowing that he has both skill and capital.

And if the Cheshire lawyer, and the servile speakers who followed, praising his tenantry at will had made agreements for term of five years, or leases for seven, fourteen, and

twenty-one, the rule and principle of agricultural improvement, and tenancy at will the unfortunate exception rendered necessary by the poverty, ignorance and dishonesty of Cheshire farmers, then the questions might have been left to be debated as a local quarrel between the tenants and the legal bailiff, to whom they had to do suit and service.

But when it is proposed to found the agricultural improvement of a country on the principle of encamping for a year, instead of settling for life—on the ground that Cheshire is wet and Norfolk dry; that in Cheshire they make cheese, as well as corn and beef, while in Norfolk they only make beef, mutton, and corn—we must travel back, and follow out the history of British agriculture for the last hundred years. And when through local tradition and scattered obscure volumes we have the change from farming for mere existence to the large returns of modern times—twenty-five tons of turnips, forty-eight bushels of wheat, fifty-six bushels of barley to the acre—and stock in proportion—one universal rule will be found to prevail, viz., long terms of tenancy.

The Lothians in Scotland, the Holkham Estates in Norfolk, the Bedford Estates in Beds, are the centres from which all the important agricultural improvements of this century have spread: originated, supported, and propagated by the influence of wise landlords, who secure the best class of tenants, by providing them with the needful, fixed material for farming, and showing them a sure return for their investment of floating capital in terms of years long enough to work the rotations of good cultivation. Some will say rashly—look to Lincolnshire—to the Yarborough Estates, but there the absence of a lease is against the landlord and in favour of the tenants. The tenants, few in number, are bred on the soil. They hold, virtually, for life. No tenant has ever been dispossessed for pique or quarrel. A notice to quit—rent being paid—is almost unknown, and the custom of the country secures compensation.

As we have said, there may be bad farming with long leases, but there can be no good farming without security of tenure for a full rotation, at least. With a story we will conclude.

An earl, a most liberal and intelligent landlord, a year or so back, was looking at a farm held on a twenty-one years' lease, of which seven years only were expired; admiring the land, without a weed, and heavy crops where ragged sheep starved in his grandfather's time. Turning to the tenant he asked, "How is it that without the old plan of naked fallows you yet have crops every year?"

"Because, my lord, I put in every year more than I take out."

"And suppose," the earl continued, "I was

to decide not to renew your lease. How should you follow then?"

"Why, my lord, I should save four thousand pounds in the last four years, in labour for cleaning manures and artificial food, and still leave the land as good as I found it!"

"Ah, I see," said the earl, "we must always agree with a good tenant five years before the lease runs out."

We commend this conversation to the consideration of the Cheshire lawyer and the Cheshire Squires.

A ROGUE'S LIFE.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS. CHAPTER THE SECOND.

I GAVE my orders to the colourman and settled matters with my friend the artist that day. The next morning, before the hour at which I expected my sitter, having, just now as much interest in the life of Lady Malkinshaw as Mr. Batterbury had in her death, I went to make kind inquiries after her ladyship's health. The answer was most reassuring. Lady Malkinshaw was quite well; and was, at that very moment, meritoriously and heartily engaged in eating her breakfast. My prospects being now of the best possible kind, I felt encouraged to write once more to my father, telling him of my fresh start in life, and proposing a renewal of our acquaintance. I regret to say that he was so rude as not to answer my letter.

Mr. Batterbury was punctual to the moment. He gave a gasp of relief when he beheld me, full of life, with my palette on my thumb, gazing fondly on my new canvas. "That's right!" he said. "I like to see you with your mind composed. Annabella would have come with me; but she has a little headache this morning. She sends her love and best wishes."

I seized my chalks and began with that confidence in myself which has never forsaken me in any emergency. Being perfectly well aware of the absolute dependence of the art of portrait-painting on the art of flattery, I determined to start with making the mere outline of my likeness a compliment to my sitter. It was much easier to resolve on doing this than really to do it. In the first place, my hand would relapse into its wicked old caricaturing habits. In the second place, my brother-in-law's face was so inveterately and completely ugly as to set every artifice of pictorial improvement at flat defiance. When a man has a nose an inch long, with the nostrils set perpendicularly, it is impossible to flatter it,—you must either change it into a fancy nose, or resignedly acquiesce in it. When a man has no perceptible eyelids, and when his eyes globularly project so far out of his head, that you expect to have to pick them up for him whenever you see him lean forward, how are mortal fingers

and brushes to diffuse the right complimentary expression over them? You must either do them the most hideous and complete justice, or give them up altogether. The late Sir Thomas Lawrence, P. R. A., was undoubtedly the most artful and uncompromising flatterer that ever smoothed out all the natural characteristic blemishes from a sitter's face; but even that accomplished parasite would have found Mr. Batterbury too much for him, and would have been driven, for the first time in his practice of art, to the uncustomary and uncourtly resource of absolutely painting a genuine likeness.

As for me I put my trust in Lady Malkinshaw's power of living, and portrayed the face of Mr. Batterbury in all its native horror. At the same time, I sensibly guarded against even the most improbable accidents, by making him pay me the fifty pounds as we went on, by instalments. We had ten sittings. Each one of them began with a message from Mr. Batterbury, giving me Annabella's love and apologies for not being able to come and see me. Each one of them ended with an argument between Mr. Batterbury and me relative to the transfer of five pounds from his pocket to mine. I came off victorious on every occasion—being backed by the noble behaviour of Lady Malkinshaw, who abstained from tumbling down, and who ate and drank, and slept, and grew lusty for three weeks together. Venerable woman! She put fifty pounds into my pocket. I shall think of her with gratitude and respect to the end of my days.

One morning, while I was sitting before my completed portrait, inwardly shuddering over the ugliness of it, a suffocating smell of musk was wafted into the studio; it was followed by a sound of rustling garments; and that again was succeeded by the personal appearance of my affectionate sister, with her husband at her heels. Annabella had got to the end of her stock of apologies, and had come to see me.

She put her handkerchief to her nose the moment she entered the room. "How do you do, Frank? Don't kiss me: you smell of paint, and I can't bear it."

I felt a similar antipathy to the smell of musk, and had not the slightest intention of kissing her; but I was too gallant a man to say so; and I only begged her to favour me by looking at her husband's portrait.

Annabella glanced all round the room, with her handkerchief still at her nose, and gathered her magnificent silk dress close about her superb figure with her disengaged hand. "What a horrid place!" she said faintly behind her handkerchief. "Can't you take some of the paint away? I'm sure there's oil on the floor. How am I to get past that nasty table with the palette on it? Why can't you bring the picture down to the carriage, Frank?" Advancing a few steps,

and looking suspiciously about her while she spoke, her eyes fell on the chimneypiece. An eau-de-cologne bottle stood upon it, which she took up immediately with a languishing sigh.

It contained turpentine for washing brushes in. Before I could warn her, she had sprinkled herself absently with half the contents of the bottle. In spite of all the musk that now filled the room, the turpentine betrayed itself almost as soon as I cried "Stop!" Annabella, with a shriek of disgust, flung the bottle furiously into the fireplace. Fortunately it was summer time, or I might have had to echo the shriek with a cry of Fire!

"You wretch! you brute! you low, mischievous, swindling blackguard!" cried my amiable sister, shaking her skirts with all her might, "you have done this on purpose! Don't tell me! I know you have. What do you mean by pestering me to come to this dog-kennel of a place?" she continued, turning fiercely upon the partner of her existence and legitimate receptacle of all her superfluous wrath. "What do you mean by bringing me here, to see how you have been swindled? Yes, sir, swindled! He has no more idea of painting than you have. He has cheated you out of your money. If he was starving to-morrow he would be the last man in England to make away with himself,—he is too great a wretch—he is too vicious—he is too lost to all sense of respectability—he is too much of a discredit to his family. Take me away! Give me your arm directly! I told you not to go near him from the first. This is what comes of your horrid fondness for money. What is three thousand pounds to you? My dress is ruined. My shawl's spoilt. *He die!* If the old woman lives to the age of Methuselah, he won't die. Give me your arm, No! Go to my father. My nerves are torn to pieces. I'm giddy, faint, sick—sick, Mr. Batterbury! I want advice. Give me your arm. Go to my father. Take me away. Call the carriage." Here she became hysterical, and vanished, leaving a mixed odour of musk and turpentine behind her, which preserved the memory of her visit for nearly a week afterwards.

"Another scene in the drama of my life seems likely to close in before long," thought I. "No chance now of getting my amiable sister to patronise struggling genius. Do I know of anybody else who will sit to me? No, not a soul. Having thus no portraits of other people to paint, what is it my duty, as a neglected artist, to do next? Clearly to take a portrait of myself.

I did so, making my own likeness quite a pleasant relief to the ugliness of my brother-in-law's. It was my intention to send both portraits to the Royal Academy Exhibition, to get custom, and show the public generally what I could do. I knew the institution with which I had to deal, and called my own likeness, *Portrait of a Nobleman*. That dex-

terous appeal to the tenderest feelings of my distinguished countrymen very nearly succeeded. The portrait of Mr. Batterbury (much the more carefully painted picture of the two) was summarily turned out. The *Portrait of a Nobleman* was politely reserved to be hung up, if the Royal Academicians could possibly find room for it. They could not. So that picture also vanished back into the obscurity of the artist's easel. Weak and well-meaning people would have desponded under these circumstances; but your genuine Rogue is a man of elastic temperament, not easily compressible under any pressure of disaster. I sent the portrait of Mr. Batterbury to the house of that distinguished patron, and the *Portrait of a Nobleman* to the pawnbroker's. After this I had plenty of elbow-room in the studio, and could walk up and down briskly, smoking my pipe, and thinking about what I should do next.

I had observed that the generous friend and vagabond brother artist, whose lodger I now was, never seemed to be in absolute want of money; and yet the walls of his studio informed me that nobody bought his pictures. There hung all his great works, rejected by the Royal Academy, and neglected by the patrons of Art; and there, nevertheless, was he, blithely plying the brush among them, not rich, it is true, but certainly never without money enough in his pocket for the supply of all his modest wants. Where did he find his resources? I determined to ask him the question the very next time he came to the studio.

"Dick," said I (we called each other by our Christian names) "where do you get your money?"

"Frank," said he, "what makes you ask that question?"

"Necessity," I replied. "My stock of money is decreasing, and I don't know how to replenish it. My pictures have been turned out of the exhibition-rooms; nobody comes to sit to me; I can't make a farthing; and I must try another line in the Arts, or leave your studio. We are old friends now. I've paid you honestly week by week; and if you can oblige me, I think you ought. You earn money somehow. Why can't I?"

"Are you at all particular?" asked Dick.

"Not in the least?" said I.

Dick nodded, and looked pleased; handed me my hat, and put on his own.

"You are just the sort of man I like," said he, "and I would sooner trust you than anyone else I know. You ask how I contrive to earn money, seeing that all my pictures are still in my own possession. My dear fellow, whenever my pockets are empty, and I want a ten-pound note to put into them, I make an *Old Master*."

I stared hard at him, not at first quite understanding what he meant.

"The *Old Master* I can make best, continued Dick, "is Claude Lorraine, whom you

may have heard of occasionally as a famous painter of classical landscapes. I don't exactly know (he has been dead so long) how many pictures he turned out, from first to last; but we will say, for the sake of argument, five hundred. Not five of these are offered for sale, perhaps, in the course of five years. Enlightened collectors of old pictures pour into the market by fifties, while specimens of Claude, or of any other Old Master you like to mention, only dribble in by ones and twos. Under these circumstances, what is to be done? Are unoffending owners of galleries to be subjected to disappointment? Or are the works of Claude, and the other fellows, to be benevolently increased in number, to supply the wants of persons of taste and quality? No man of humanity but must lean to the latter alternative. The collectors, observe, don't know anything about it—they buy Claude (to take an instance from my own practice) as they buy all the other Old Masters, because of his reputation, not because of the pleasure they get from his works. Give them a picture with a good large ruin, fancy trees, prancing nymphs, and a watery sky; dirty it down dexterously to the right pitch; put it in an old frame; call it a Claude; and the sphere of the Old Master is enlarged, the collector is delighted, the picture-dealer is enriched, and the neglected modern artist claps a joyful hand on a well-filled pocket. Some men have a knack at making Rembrandts, others have a turn for Raphaels, Titians, Cuyps, Watteaus, and the rest of them. Anyhow, we are all made happy—all pleased with each other—all benefited alike. Kindness is propagated, and money is dispersed. Come along, my boy, and make an Old Master!

He led the way into the street, as he spoke. I felt the irresistible force of his logic. I sympathised with the ardent philanthropy of his motives. I burned with a noble ambition to extend the sphere of the Old Masters. In short, I took the tide at the flood, and followed Dick.

We plunged into some by-streets, struck off sharp into a court, and entered a house by a back-door. A little old gentleman in a black velvet dressing-gown met us in the passage. Dick instantly presented me; "Mr. Frank Softly—Mr. Ishmael Pickup." The little old gentleman stared at me distrustfully. I bowed to him with that inexorable politeness which I first learnt under the instructive fist of Gentleman Jones, and which no force of adverse circumstances has ever availed to mitigate in after life. Mr. Ishmael Pickup followed my lead. There is not the least need to describe him—he was a Jew.

"Go into the front show-room, and look at the pictures, while I speak to Mr. Pickup," said Dick, familiarly throwing open a door, and pushing me into a kind of gallery beyond. I found myself quite alone, surrounded by modern-antique pictures of all schools and

sizes, of all degrees of dirt and dulness, with all the names of all the famous Old Masters from Titian to Teniers, inscribed on their frames. A "pearly little gem," by Claude, with a ticket marked "Sold," stuck into the frame, particularly attracted my attention. It was Dick's last ten-pound job; and it did credit to the youthful master's abilities as a workman-like maker of Claudes.

I have been informed that, since the time of which I am writing, the business of gentlemen of Mr. Pickup's class has rather fallen off, and that there are dealers in pictures, now-a-days, who are as just and honourable men as can be found in any profession or calling, anywhere under the sun. This change, which I report with sincerity and reflect on with amazement, is, as I suspect, mainly the result of certain wholesale, modern improvements in the position of contemporary Art, which have necessitated improvements and alterations in the business of dealing. In my time, the encouragers of modern painting were limited in number to a few noblemen and gentlemen of ancient lineage, who, in matters of taste, at least, never presumed to think for themselves. They either inherited or bought a gallery more or less full of old pictures. It was as much a part of their education to put their faith in these on hearsay evidence, as to put their faith in King, Lords and Commons. It was an article of their creed to believe that the dead painters were the great men, and that, the more the living painters imitated the dead, the better was their chance of becoming at some future day, and in a minor degree, great also. At certain times and seasons, these noblemen and gentlemen self-distrustfully strayed into the painting-room of a modern artist, self-distrustfully allowed themselves to be rather attracted by his pictures, self-distrustfully bought one or two of them at prices which would appear so incredibly low, in these days, that I really cannot venture to quote them. The picture was sent home; the nobleman or gentleman (almost always an amiable and a hospitable man) would ask the artist to his house and introduce him to the distinguished individuals who frequented it; but would never admit his picture, on terms of equality, into the society, even of the second-rate Old Masters. His work was hung up in any out-of-the-way corner of the gallery that could be found; it had been bought under protest; it was admitted by sufferance; its freshness and brightness damaged it terribly by contrast with the dirtiness and the dinginess of its elderly predecessors; and its only points selected for praise, were those in which it most nearly resembled the peculiar mannerism of some Old Master, not those in which it resembled the characteristics of the old mistress—Nature. The unfortunate artist had no court of appeal that he could turn to. Nobody beneath the nobleman, or the gentleman of ancient lineage, so much as thought of buying a modern

picture. Nobody dared to whisper that the Art of painting had, in anywise been improved or worthily enlarged in its sphere by any modern professors; for one nobleman who was ready to buy one genuine, modern picture at a small price, there were twenty noblemen ready to buy twenty more than doubtful old pictures at great prices. The consequence was, that some of the most famous artists of the English school, whose pictures are now bought at auction sales for fabulous prices, were then hardly able to make an income. They were a scrupulously patient and squeamishly conscientious body of men, who would as soon have thought of breaking into a house, or equalising the distribution of wealth, on the highway, by the simple machinery of a horse and pistol, as of making Old Masters to order. They sat resignedly in their lonely studios, surrounded by unsold pictures which have since been covered again and again with gold and bank-notes by eager buyers at auctions and show-rooms, whose money has gone into other than the painter's pockets: who have never dreamed that the painter, had the smallest moral right to a farthing of it. Year after year, they still stood up invincibly, palette in hand, fighting the old invariable battle of individual merit against contemporary dulness—fighting bravely, patiently, independently; and leaving to Mr. Pickup and his pupils a complete monopoly of all the profit which could be extracted, in their line of business, from the feebly-buttoned pocket of the patron, and the inexhaustible credulity of the connoisseur.

Now all this is changed. Traders and makers of all kinds of commodities have effected a revolution in the picture-world, never dreamt of by the noblemen and gentlemen of ancient lineage, and consistently protested against to this day by the very few of them who still remain alive. The daring innovators started with the new notion of buying a picture which they themselves could admire and appreciate, and for the genuineness of which the artist was still living to vouch. These rough and ready customers were not to be led by rules or frightened by precedents. They were not to be easily imposed upon, for the article they wanted was not to be easily counterfeited. Sturdily holding to their own opinions, they thought incessant repetitions of Saints, Martyrs, and Holy Families, monotonous and uninteresting,—and said so. They thought little pictures of ugly Dutchwomen scouring pots, and drunken Dutchmen playing cards, dirty and dear at the price—and said so. They saw that trees were green in nature, and brown in the Old Masters, and they thought the latter colour not an improvement on the former,—and said so. They wanted interesting subjects; variety, resemblance to nature; genuineness of the article, and fresh paint; they had no ancestors whose feelings, as founders of galleries, it was necessary to consult; no critical gentlemen and

writers of valuable works to snub them when they were in spirits; nothing to lead them by the nose but their own shrewdness, their own interests, and their own tastes—so they turned their backs valiantly on the Old Masters, and marched off in a body to the living men. From that time good modern pictures have risen in the scale; even as articles of commerce and safe investments for money they have now (as some disinterested collectors who dine at certain annual dinners I know of, can testify) distanced the old pictures in the race. The modern painters who have survived the brunt of the battle, have lived to see pictures for which they once asked hundreds, selling for thousands, and the young generation making incomes by the brush in one year, which it would have cost the old heroes of the easel ten to accumulate. The posterity of Mr. Pickup still do a tolerable stroke of business (making bright, modern masters for the market which is glutted with the dingy old material) and will, probably, continue to thrive and multiply in the future: the one venerable institution of this world which we can safely count upon as likely to last, being the institution of human folly. Nevertheless, if a wise man of the reformed taste wants a modern picture, there are places for him to go to now where he may be sure of getting it genuine; where, if the artist is not alive to vouch for his work, the facts at any rate have not had time to die which vouch for the dealer who sells it. In my time matters were rather different. The painters *we* thrived by had died long enough ago for pedigrees to get confused, and identities disputable; and if I had been desirous of really purchasing a genuine Old Master for myself—speaking as a practical man—I don't know where I should have gone to ask for one, or whose judgment I could have safely relied on to guard me from being cheated, before I bought it.

But while I am tracing (in outline) the progress of the wonderful Art-revolution of these modern times, I am forgetting the calm and corrupt days of old, and leaving myself unnoticed in Mr. Ishmael Pickup's Gallery of Art. Let me resume the unrolling of the various folds of my narrative—let the Rogue return to the business of roguery.

I was left for some time alone in the manufactory of Old Masters before my friend rejoined me. When he at last opened the door of the gallery, he approached me confidentially, and spoke in a mysterious whisper.

"Pickup is suspicious," said he; "and I have had all the difficulty in the world to pave your way smoothly for you at the outset. However, if you can contrive to make a small Rembrandt, as a specimen, you may consider yourself employed here until further notice. I am obliged to particularise Rembrandt, because he is the only Old Master

disengaged at present. The professional gentleman who used to do him died the other day in the Fleet—he had a turn for Rembrandts, and can't be easily replaced. Do you think you could step into his shoes? It's a peculiar gift, like an ear for music, or a turn for mathematics. Of course you will be put up to the simple elementary rules, and will have the professional gentleman's last Rembrandt as a guide; the rest depends, my dear friend, on your powers of imitation. Don't be discouraged by failures, but try again and again; and mind you are dirty and dark enough. You have heard a great deal about the light and shade of Rembrandt—remember always that, in your case, light means dusky yellow, and shade dense black; remember that, and——"

"No pay," said the voice of Mr. Pickup behind me; "no pay, my dear, unless your Rembrandtish good enough to take me in—even me, Ishmael, who dealsh in pictersh and knowsh what'sh what."

I agreed to everything, as I always do under similar circumstances. I was introduced to the workshop, and to the eminent gentlemen occupying it. My model Rembrandt was put before me; the simple elementary rules were explained; and my materials were all placed under my hands. Regard for the lovers of the Old Masters, and for the moral wellbeing of society, forbids me to be particular about the nature of my labours, or to go into dangerous detail on the subject of my first failures and my subsequent success. I may, however, harmlessly admit that my Rembrandt was to be of the small or cabinet size, and that, as there was a run on Burgomasters just then, my subject was naturally to be of the Burgomaster sort. Three parts of my picture consisted entirely of different shades of dirty brown and black; the fourth being composed of a ray of yellow light falling upon the wrinkled face of a treacle-coloured old man. A dim glimpse of a hand, and a faint suggestion of something like a brass wash-hand basin, completed the job, which gave great satisfaction to Mr. Pickup, and which was described in the catalogue as, "A Burgomaster at Breakfast. Originally in the collection of Mynheer Van Grubb. Amsterdam. A rare example of the master. Not engraved. The chiaroscuro in this extraordinary work is of a truly sublime character. Price, Two Hundred Guineas." I got five pounds for it. I suppose Mr. Pickup got one, ninety-five.

This was perhaps not very encouraging as a beginning, in a pecuniary point of view. But I was to get five pounds more, if my Rembrandt sold within a given time. It sold a week after it was in a fit state to be trusted in the show-room. I got my money, and began enthusiastically on another Rembrandt—A Burgomaster's Wife Poking the Fire. Last time, the chiaroscuro of the master had been yellow and black, this time it was

to be red and black. I had the pleasantest possible anticipations of the result, and so had Mr. Pickup, when an unexpected catastrophe happened, which shut up the shop and abruptly terminated my experience as a maker of Old Masters.

"The Burgomaster's Breakfast" had been sold to a new customer, a venerable connoisseur, blessed with a great fortune and a large picture-gallery. The old gentleman was in raptures with the picture—with its tone, with its breadth, with its grand feeling for effect, with its simple treatment of detail. It wanted nothing, in his opinion, but a little cleaning. Mr. Pickup knew the raw and ticklish state of the surface, however, far too well, to allow of even an attempt at performing this process, and solemnly asserted, that he was acquainted with no cleansing preparation which could be used on the Rembrandt without danger of "flying off the last exquisite glazings of the immortal master's brush." The old gentleman was quite satisfied with this reason for not cleaning the Burgomaster, and took away his purchase in his own carriage on the spot. For three weeks we heard nothing more of him. At the end of that time, a Hebrew friend of Mr. Pickup, employed in a lawyer's office, terrified us all by the information that a gentleman related to our venerable connoisseur had seen the Rembrandt, had pronounced it to be an impudent counterfeit, and had engaged on his own account to have the picture tested in a court of law, and to charge the seller and maker thereof with conspiring to obtain money under false pretences. Mr. Pickup and I looked at each other with very blank faces on receiving this agreeable piece of news. What was to be done? I recovered the full use of my faculties first; and I was the man who solved that important and difficult question, while the rest were still utterly bewildered by it. "Will you promise me five and twenty pounds, in the presence of these gentlemen, if I get you out of this scrape?" said I to my terrified employer. Ishmael Pickup wrung his dirty hands, and answered, "Yesh, my dear!"

Our informant in this awkward matter was employed in the office of the lawyers who were to have the conducting of the case against us; and he was able to tell me some of the things I most wanted to know in relation to the picture. I found out from him that the Rembrandt was still in our customer's possession. The old gentleman had consented to the question of its genuineness being tried, but had far too high an idea of his own knowledge as a connoisseur to incline to the opinion that he had been taken in. His suspicious relative was not staying in the house, but was in the habit of visiting him, every day, in the forenoon. That was as much as I wanted to know from others. The rest depended on myself, on luck, time, human

credulity, and a smattering of chemical knowledge which I had acquired in the days of my medical studies. I left the conclave at the picture-dealer's forthwith, and purchased at the nearest druggist's a bottle containing a certain powerful liquid, which I decline to particularise on high moral grounds. I labelled the bottle, "The Amsterdam Cleansing Compound;" and I wrapped round it the following note:—

"Mr. Pickup's respectful compliments to Mr.—(let us say, Green). Is rejoiced to state that he finds himself unexpectedly able to forward Mr. Green's views relative to the cleaning of The Burgomaster's Breakfast. The enclosed compound has just reached him from Amsterdam. It is made from a recipe found among the papers of Rembrandt himself,—has been used with the most astonishing results on the Master's pictures in every gallery of Holland, and is now being applied to the surface of the largest Rembrandt in Mr. P.'s own collection. Directions for use:—Lay the picture flat, pour the whole contents of the bottle over it gently, so as to flood the entire surface; leave the liquid on the surface for six hours, then wipe it off briskly with a soft cloth of as large a size as can be conveniently used. The effect will be the most wonderful removal of all dirt, and a complete and brilliant metamorphosis of the present dingy surface of the picture."

I left this note and the bottle myself at two o'clock that day; then went home, and confidently awaited the result.

The next morning our friend from the office called, announcing himself by a burst of laughter outside the door. Mr. Green had implicitly followed the directions in the letter the moment he received it—had allowed the "Amsterdam Cleansing Compound" to remain on the Rembrandt until eight o'clock in the evening—had called for the softest linen cloth in the whole house—and had then, with his own venerable hands, carefully wiped off the Compound, and with it the whole surface of the picture! The brown, the black, the Burgomaster, the breakfast, and the ray of yellow light, all came clean off together, in considerably less than a minute of time. If the picture was brought into court now, the evidence it could give against us was limited to a bit of plain panel, and a mass of black pulp rolled up in a duster.

Our line of defence was, of course, that the Compound had been improperly used. For the rest, we relied with well-placed confidence on the want of evidence against us. Mr. Pickup wisely closed his shop for awhile, and went off to the continent to ransack the foreign galleries. I received my five and twenty pounds, rubbed out the beginning of my second Rembrandt, closed the back door of the workshop behind me, and there was another scene of my life at an end. No matter! I could still pace the pavement with money in my pocket, and was just as ready as ever to begin the world again for the fifth time.

My first visit of ceremony and gratitude combined was to the studio of my excellent

artist-friend, whom I have already presented to the reader under the sympathetic name of "Dick." He greeted me with a letter in his hand. It was addressed to me—it had been left at the studio a few days since; and (marvel of all marvels!) the handwriting was Mr. Batterbury's. Had this philanthropic man not done befriending me even yet? Were there any present or prospective advantages to be got out of him still? Read his letter, and judge:

"Sir,—Although you have forfeited by your ungentlemanly conduct towards myself, and your heartlessly mischievous reception of my dear wife, all claim upon the forbearance of the most forbearing of your relatives, I am disposed, from motives of regard for the tranquillity of Mrs. Batterbury's family, and of sheer good-nature so far as I am myself concerned, to afford you one more chance of retrieving your position by leading a respectable life. The situation I am enabled to offer you is that of secretary to a new Literary and Scientific Institution, about to be opened in the town of Duskydale, near which neighbourhood I possess, as you must be aware, some landed property. The office has been placed at my disposal, as vice-president of the new Institution. The salary is fifty pounds a-year, with apartments on the attic-floor of the building. The duties are various, and will be explained to you by the local-committee, if you choose to present yourself to them with the enclosed letter of introduction. After the unscrupulous manner in which you have imposed on my liberality by deceiving me into giving you fifty pounds for an audacious caricature of myself, which it is impossible to hang up in any room of the house, I think this instance of my forgiving disposition still to befriend you, after all that has happened, ought to appeal to any better feelings that you may still have left, and revive the long dormant emotions of repentance and self-reproach, when you think on your obedient servant, Daniel Batterbury."

Bless me! What a long-winded style, and what a fuss about fifty pounds a-year, and a bed in an attic! These were naturally the first emotions which Mr. Batterbury's letter produced in me. What was his real motive for writing it? I hope nobody will do me so great an injustice as to suppose that I hesitated for one instant about the way of finding *that* out. Of course, I started off directly to inquire after the health of Lady Malkinshaw.

"Much better, sir," answered my grandmother's venerable butler, wiping his lips carefully before he spoke; "her ladyship's health has been much improved since her accident."

"Accident!" I exclaimed. "What, another? Lately? Stairs again?"

"No, sir; the drawing-room window, this time," answered the butler with semi-tipsy gravity. "Her ladyship's sight having been defective of late years, occasions her some difficulty in calculating distances. Three days ago, her ladyship went to look out of window, and, miscalculating the distance—" Here the butler, with a fine dramatic feeling for telling a story, stopped just before the climax of the narrative, and looked me in the face with an expression of the deepest sympathy.

"And miscalculating the distance?" I repeated, impatiently.

"Put her head through a pane of glass," said the butler, in a soft voice suited to the pathetic nature of the communication. "By great good fortune her ladyship had been dressed for the day, and had got her turban on. This saved her ladyship's head. But her ladyship's neck, sir, had a very narrow escape. A bit of the broken glass wounded it within half a quarter of an inch of the carotid artery," (meaning, probably, carotid,) "I heard the medical gentlemen say, and shall never forget it to my dying day, that her ladyship's life had been saved by a hair's-breadth. As it was, the blood lost (the medical gentleman said that, too, sir) was accidentally of the greatest possible benefit, being apopleptic, in the way of clearing out the system. Her ladyship's appetite has been improved ever since—the carriage is out airing of her at this very moment—likewise, she takes the footman's arm and the maid's up and down stairs now, which she never would hear of before this last accident. 'I feel ten years younger' (those were her ladyship's own words to me, this very day), 'I feel ten years younger, Vokins, since I broke the drawing-room window.' And her ladyship looks it!"

No doubt. Here was the key to Mr. Batterbury's letter of forgiveness. His chance of receiving the legacy looked now farther off than ever; he could not feel the same confidence as his wife in my power of living down any amount of starvation and adversity; and he was, therefore, quite ready to take the first opportunity of promoting my precious personal welfare and security, of which he could avail himself, without spending a farthing of money. I saw it all clearly, and admired the hereditary toughness of the Malkinshaw family more gratefully than ever. What should I do? Go to Duskydale? Why not? I had no particular engagements; I was ready for a change; and I was curious to see what sort of thing a Literary and Scientific Institution might be. I had only to pack up my traps, write a letter of contrition and civility to Mr. Batterbury, and then—hey for Duskydale!

I got to my new destination the next day, presented my credentials, gave myself the full advantage of my high connections, and was received with enthusiasm and distinction. I found the new Institution torn by internal schism, even before it was opened to the public. Two factions governed it—a grave faction and a gay faction. Two questions agitated it: the first referring to the propriety of celebrating the opening season by a public ball, and the second to the expediency of admitting novels into the library. The grim Puritan interest of the whole neighbourhood was, of course, on the grave side—against both dancing and novels, as proposed by local loose thinkers and latitudinarians of

every degree. I was officially introduced to the debate at the height of the squabble; and found myself one of a large party in a small room, sitting round a long table, each man of us with a new pewter inkstand, a new quill-pen, and a clean sheet of foolscap paper before him. Seeing that everybody spoke, I got on my legs along with the rest, and made a slashing speech on the loose-thinking side. I was followed by the leader of the grim faction—an unlicked curate of the largest dimensions. "If there were, so to speak, no other reason against dancing," said my reverend opponent, "there is one unanswerable objection to it. Gentlemen! John the Baptist lost his head through dancing!"

Every man of the grim faction hammered delightedly on the table, as that formidable argument was produced; and the curate sat down in triumph. I jumped up to reply, amid the counter-cheering of the loose-thinkers; but before I could say a word, the President of the Institution and the rector of the parish came into the room. They were both men of authority, men of sense, and fathers of charming daughters, and they turned the scale on the right side in no time. The question relating to the admission of novels was postponed, and the question of dancing or no dancing was put to the vote on the spot. The President, the rector, and myself, the three handsomest and highest-bred men in the assembly, led the way on the liberal side, waggishly warning all gallant gentlemen present to beware of disappointing the young ladies. This decided the waverers, and the waverers decided the majority. My first business, as secretary, was the drawing out of a model card of admission to the ball.

My next occupation was to look at the rooms provided for me. The Duskydale Institution occupied a badly-repaired ten-roomed house, with a great flimsy saloon built at one side of it, smelling of paint and damp plaster, and called the Lecture Theatre. It was the chilliest, ugliest, emptiest, gloomiest place I ever entered in my life; the idea of doing anything but sitting down and crying in it seemed to me quite preposterous; but the committee took a different view of the matter, and praised the Lecture Theatre as a perfect ball-room. The Secretary's apartments were two garrets, asserting themselves in the most barefaced manner, without an attempt at disguise. If I had intended to do more than earn my first quarter's salary, I should have complained. But as I had not the slightest intention of remaining at Duskydale, I could afford to establish a reputation for amiability by saying nothing. "Have you seen Mr. Softly, the new Secretary? A most distinguished person, and quite an acquisition to the neighbourhood." Such was the popular opinion of me among the young ladies and the liberal inhabitants. "Have you seen

Mr. Softly, the new Secretary? A worldly, vain-glorious young man. The last person in England to promote the interests of our new Institution." Such was the counter-estimate of me among the Puritan population. I report both opinions quite disinterestedly. There is generally something to be said on either side of every question; and, as for me, I can always hold up the scales impartially, even when my own character is the substance weighing in them. Readers of ancient history need not be reminded, at this time of day, that there may be Roman virtue even in a Rogue.

The objects, interests, and general business of the Duskydale Institution were matters with which I never thought of troubling myself on assuming the duties of secretary. All my energies were given to the arrangements connected with the opening ball. I was elected by acclamation to the office of general manager of the entertainments; and I did my best to deserve the confidence reposed in me; leaving literature and science, so far as I was concerned, perfectly at liberty to advance themselves or not, just as they liked. Whatever my colleagues may have done, after I left them, nobody at Duskydale can accuse me of having ever been accessory to the disturbing of quiet people with useful knowledge. I took the arduous and universally neglected duty of teaching the English people how to be amused entirely on my own shoulders, and left the easy and customary business of making them miserable to others. My unhappy countrymen! (and thrice unhappy they of the poorer sort)—any man can preach to them, lecture to them, and form them into classes—but where is the man who can get them to amuse themselves? Anybody may cram their poor heads; but who will brighten their grave faces? Don't read story-books, don't go to plays, don't dance! Finish your long day's work and then intoxicate your minds with solid history, revel in the too-attractive luxury of the lecture-room, sink under the soft temptation of classes for mutual instruction! How many potent, grave, and reverent tongues discourse to the popular ear in these syren strains, and how obediently and resignedly this same weary popular ear listens! What if a bold man spring up one day, crying aloud in our social wilderness, "Play, for Heaven's sake, or you will work yourselves into a nation of automatons! Shake a loose leg to a lively fiddle! Women of England! drag the lecturer off the rostrum, and the male mutual instructor out of the class, and ease their poor addled heads of evenings by making them dance and sing with you! Accept no offer from any man who cannot be proved, for a year past, to have systematically lost his dignity at least three times a week, after office hours. You, daughters of Eve, who have that wholesome love of pleasure which is one of the greatest adornments of the female

character, set up a society for the promotion of universal amusement, and save the British nation from the lamentable social consequences of its own gravity!" Imagine a voice crying lustily after this fashion—what sort of echoes would it find?—Groans?

I know what sort of echoes my voice found. They were so discouraging to me, and to the frivolous minority of pleasure-seekers, that I recommended lowering the price of admission so as to suit the means of any decent people who were willing to leave off money-grubbing and tear themselves from the charms of useful recreation for one evening at least. The proposition was indignantly negatived by the managers of the institution. I am so singularly sanguine a man that I was not to be depressed even by this. My next efforts to fill the ball-room could not be blamed. I procured a local directory, put fifty tickets in my pocket, dressed myself in nankeen pantaloons and a sky-blue coat (then the height of fashion), and set forth to tout for dancers among all the members of the genteel population, who, not being notorious Puritans, had also not been so obliging as to take tickets for the ball. There never was any pride or bashfulness about me. I stick at nothing; I am as easy and even-tempered a Rogue as you have met with anywhere since the days of Gil Blas.

My temperament being opposed to doing anything with regularity, I opened the directory at hazard, and determined to make my first call at the first house that caught my eye. Vallombrosa Vale Cottages. Number One. Doctor and Miss Knapton. Very good. I have no preferences. Let me sell the first two tickets there. I found the place; I opened the garden gate; I tripped up to the door with my accustomed buoyancy and my sunny smile. I never felt easier or more careless; and yet, at that very moment, I was rushing with headlong rapidity to meet my fate.

What fate?

Fate in yellow muslin, with black hair curling down to her waist, with large, soft, melancholy brown eyes, with round dusky cheeks, with nimble white fingers working a silk purse, with a heavenly blush and a sad smile—fate, in short, by the name of Miss Knapton. Love takes various lengths of time, I believe, to subjugate less impressionable men than I am. I have heard of certain hard natures capable of holding out against fascination for a week. It is incredible; but I will offend nobody by saying that I do not believe it. In my case, on my word of honour as a gentleman and lover, Miss Knapton subjugated me in less than half-a-minute. When I felt myself colouring as I bowed to her, I knew that it was all over with me. I never blushed before in my life. What a very curious sensation it is!

I saw her wave her hand, and felt a greedy longing to kiss it. I heard her say sweetly

and indicatively, "My father." What eloquence! The doctor was in the room, but his daughter had dazzled me, and I had not seen him. I bowed—I stammered—I was at a loss for expressions. O Cupid! think of the interests of the Duskydale Institution! Chubby tyrant of the bow and arrow, give me back enough of my former self to sell two tickets, at least! She spoke again:

"The gentleman who is secretary to the new Institution, I believe?"

How profoundly true! She smiled upon me; she saw the damage she had done, and tenderly repaired it. I thawed—I expanded under the treatment. My faculties came back to me. I ceased to blush; I explained my errand; I became as agreeable and as gallant as ever.

Her father answered. Having partially recovered my senses, I was able to observe him. A tall, stout gentleman, with impressive respectability oozing out of him at every pore—with a swelling outline of black-waistcoated stomach, with a lofty forehead, with a smooth double chin resting pulpily on a white cravat. Everything in harmony about him except his eyes, and these were so sharp, bright, and resolute, that they seemed to contradict the bland conventionality which overspread all the rest of the man. Eyes with wonderful intelligence and self-dependence in them; perhaps, also, with something a little false in them, which I might have discovered immediately under ordinary circumstances: but I looked at the doctor through the medium of his daughter, and saw nothing of him at the first glance but his merits.

"We are both very much indebted to you, sir, for your politeness in calling," he said, with excessive civility of manner. "But our stay at this place has drawn to an end. I only came here for the re-establishment of my daughter's health. She has benefited greatly by the change of air, and we have arranged to return home to-morrow. Otherwise, we should have gladly profited by your kind offer of tickets for the ball."

Of course I had one eye on the young lady while he was speaking. She was looking at her father, and a strange sadness was stealing over her face. What did that mean? Disappointment at missing the ball? No, it was a much deeper feeling than that. My curiosity was excited. I addressed a complimentary entreaty to the doctor not to take his daughter away from us. I asked him to reflect on the irreparable eclipse that he would be casting over the Duskydale ball-room. To my amazement, Miss Knapton only looked down gloomily on her work while I spoke, and her father laughed contemptuously.

"We are too completely strangers here," he said, "for our loss to be felt by any one. From all that I can gather, society in Duskydale will be glad to hear of our departure."

Miss Knapton looked more gloomily than before. I protested against the doctor's last words. He laughed again, with a quick, distrustful look, this time, at his daughter.

"If you were to mention my name among your respectable inhabitants," he went on, with a strong, sneering emphasis on the word respectable, "they would most likely purse up their lips and look grave at it. Since I gave up practice as a physician, I have engaged in chemical investigations on a large scale, destined, I hope, to lead to some important public results. Until I arrive at these, I am necessarily obliged, in my own interests, to keep my experiments secret, and to impose similar discretion on the workmen whom I employ. This unavoidable appearance of mystery, and the strictly retired life which my studies oblige me to lead, offend the narrow-minded people in my part of the county, close to Barkingham; and the unpopularity of my pursuits has followed me here. The general opinion, I believe, is, that I am seeking by unholy arts for the philosopher's stone. Plain man, as you see me, I find myself getting quite the reputation of a Doctor Faustus in the popular mind. Even educated people in this very place shake their heads and pity my daughter Laura there for living with an alchemical parent, within easy smelling-distance of an explosive laboratory. Excessively absurd, is it not?"

It might have been excessively absurd; but the lovely Laura sat with her eyes on her work, looking as if it were excessively sad, and not giving her father the faintest answering smile when he glanced towards her and laughed, as he said his last words. I could not at all tell what to make of it. The doctor talked of the social consequences of his chemical inquiries as if we were living in the middle ages. However, I was far too anxious to see the charming brown eyes again to ask questions which would be sure to keep them cast down. So I changed the topic to chemistry in general; and, to the doctor's evident astonishment and pleasure, told him of my own early studies in the science. This led to the mention of my father, whose reputation had reached the ears of Doctor Knapton. As he told me that, his daughter looked up—the sun of beauty shone on me again! I touched next on my high connections, and on Lady Malkinshaw; I described myself as temporarily banished from home for humorous caricaturing, and amiable youthful wildness. She was interested; she smiled—and the sun of beauty shone warmer than ever! I diverged to general topics, and got brilliant and amusing. She laughed—the nightingale-notes of her merriment bubbled into my ears caressingly—why could I not shut my eyes to listen to them? Her colour rose; her face grew animated. Poor soul! A little lively company was but too evidently a rare treat to her. Under such circumstances, who would not be

amusing? If she had said to me, "Mr. Softly, I like tumbling," I should have made a clown of myself on the spot. I should have stood on my head (if I could), and been amply rewarded for the graceful exertion, if the eyes of Laura Knapton had looked kindly on my elevated heels!

How long I staid is more than I can tell. Lunch came up. I eat and drank, and grew more amusing than ever. When I at last rose to go, the brown eyes looked on me very kindly, and the doctor gave me his card.

"If you don't mind trusting yourself in the clutches of Doctor Faustus," he said, with a gay smile, "I shall be delighted to see you, if you are ever in the neighbourhood of Barkingham."

I wrung his hand, mentally relinquishing my secretaryship while I thanked him for the invitation. I half put out my hand to his daughter; and the dear friendly girl met the advance with the most charming readiness. She gave me a good, hearty, vigorous, uncompromising shake. O, precious right hand! never did I properly appreciate your value until that moment.

Going out with my head in the air, and my senses in the seventh heaven, I jostled an elderly gentleman passing before the garden-gate. I turned round to apologise; it was my brother in office, the estimable Treasurer of the Duskydale Institution.

"I have been half over the town looking after you," he said. "The Managing Committee, on reflection, consider your plan of personally soliciting public attendance at the ball to be compromising the dignity of the Institution, and beg you, therefore, to abandon it."

"Very well," said I, "there is no harm done. Thus far, I have only solicited two persons, Doctor and Miss Knapton, in that delightful little cottage there."

"You don't mean to say you have asked them to come to the ball!"

"To be sure I have. And I am sorry to say they can't accept the invitation. Why should they not be asked?"

"Because nobody visits them."

"And why should nobody visit them?"

The Treasurer put his arm confidentially through mine, and walked me on a few steps.

"In the first place," he said, "Doctor Knapton's name is not down in the Medical List."

"Some mistake," I suggested, in my off-hand way. "Or some foreign doctor's degree not recognised by the prejudiced people in England."

"In the second place," continued the Treasurer, "we have found out that he is not visited at Barkingham. Consequently, it would be the height of imprudence to visit him here."

"Pooh! pooh! All the nonsense of nar-

row-minded people, because he lives a retired life, and is engaged in finding out chemical secrets which the ignorant public don't know how to appreciate."

"The shutters are always up in the front top windows of his house at Barkingham," said the Treasurer, lowering his voice mysteriously. "I know that from a friend resident near him. The windows themselves are barred. It is currently reported that the top of the house, inside, is shut off by iron doors from the bottom. Workmen are employed there who don't belong to the neighbourhood, who don't drink at the public-houses, who only associate with each other. Unfamiliar smells and noises find their way outside sometimes. Nobody in the house can be got to talk. The doctor, as he calls himself, does not even make an attempt to get into society, does not even try to see company for the sake of his poor unfortunate daughter. What do you think of all that?"

"Think!" I repeated contemptuously. "I think the inhabitants of Barkingham are the best finders of mares'-nests in all England. The doctor is making important chemical discoveries (the possible value of which I can appreciate, being chemical myself), and he is not quite fool enough to expose valuable secrets to the view of all the world. His laboratory is at the top of the house, and he wisely shuts it off from the bottom to prevent accidents. He is one of the best fellows I ever met with, and his daughter is the loveliest girl in the world. What do you all mean by making mysteries about nothing? He has given me an invitation to go and see him. I suppose the next thing you will find out is, that there is something underhand even in that?"

"You won't accept the invitation?"

"I shall, at the very first opportunity; and if you had seen Miss Knapton, so would you."

"Don't go. Take my advice and don't go," said the Treasurer, gravely. "You are a young man. Reputable friends are of importance to you at the outset of life. I say nothing against Doctor Knapton—he came here as a stranger, and he goes away again as a stranger—but you can't be sure that his purpose in asking you so readily to his house is a harmless one. Making a new acquaintance is always a doubtful speculation; but when a man is not visited by his respectable neighbours—"

"Because he doesn't open his shutters," I interposed, sarcastically.

"Because there are doubts about him and his house, which he will not clear up," retorted the Treasurer. "You can take your own way. You may turn out right, and we may all be wrong; I can only say again, it is rash to make doubtful acquaintances. Sooner or later you are always sure to repent it. In your place I should certainly not accept the invitation."

"In my place, my dear sir," said I, "you would do exactly what I mean to do."

The Treasurer took his arm out of mine, and, without saying another word, wished me good morning.

Did I determine, on reflection, to follow my friend's advice? Certainly not. I was in love; and what man worthy of the name follows friendly advice in that situation? No; I had resolved, at all hazards, to go to the doctor's, at Barkingham; and, being firmness itself where my own sentiments and tender interests are at stake—in due course of time away I went.

Did I repent my rashness? We shall see.

ONE CURE MORE.

⁶ The last extravagance of quackery is called the Movement-cure. It is of German breeding. Its Hahnemann, however, was a Swede, named Ling. There is a London professor of it, who is a German M.D., and by whom it is expounded at length in a book, illustrated with a series of useful pictures. They represent a patient who goes through the whole gymnastic series, and is a victim to all the fingering and mauling by which epilepsy, consumption, disease of the heart, liver complaints, scrofula, dropsy, cholera, and more of the several ills that flesh is heir to, may be relieved, cured, or averted, according to the doctor. The remedy consists, in every case, in getting up a certain movement on the part of the afflicted body; or lifting of arms to a particular height at a particular pace during a particular time; a scientific kicking of the heels, and other contortions exhibited by a new class of artists called acrobats. This gymnastic remedy must be applied scientifically, and needs always the help of a professor, or of two or three professors, or professors' assistants; one fingering here, another there; and all, we suppose, applying a squeeze dexterous over the region of the pocket.

An ordinary walk is not a Movement-cure; although a good stout one has been long accepted as a remedy against the megrims. A curative walk is to be taken in accordance with the rules of the Movement-cure in the manner to be described presently; but we must premise an observation or two before quoting out of the book. The two persons engaged in the movement are represented by the letters G. and P. G. is the Gymnast or operator upon P. the Patient, or the Pigeon. Cures are effected only by what are called gymnastic movements regulated as to order, space, time, and degree of force. To raise the arms in a random way and stretch them in the air is nothing; but "to stretch the arms in a manner and direction, and with a velocity, and force all previously determined and exactly prescribed, and then to move their different parts precisely as determined and commanded: this is a gymnastic

movement." Now such movements are called by this system of quackery, active when they are made to order by the volition of the P. or patient; passive, when they are produced for him by the external force of the G. or gymnast, who pushes, pulls, or presses; half active when they are compound movements, the force of the gymnast pulling a leg forward, for instance, opposed, to a given extent, by the force of the patient who resists. This is called in the prescription P. R. (patient resists). Also, it is the force of the patient moving a part of his body against the resisting force of the gymnast, called in the prescriptions G. R. (gymnast resists). Now, this is a real constitutional and curative walk, considered scientifically. We quote the definition given in the treatise: "The patient makes the movements of walking on the same spot, while one or two gymnasts, with their hands placed on the shoulder or hips, press his body downwards; thus the movement is half-active, with G. R."

We cannot explain the whole set of technical terms that represent the back straight, toes out, and other more complex movements of which a gymnastic-prescription is composed. But to show that this is really a very deep science, and quite a philosophy to take the town by storm—being quite as full of common sense as Pop Goes the Weasel, and as easy of comprehension as Abracadabara—we quote the last of a set of five prescriptions, which, in five months, cured a man of consumption:—

FIFTH PRESCRIPTION.

1. Trunk lying, double leg down pressure (P. R.)
2. Stem lying, holding.
3. Stretch stride high sitting, trunk back flexion (G. R.) with stomach-loin pressure.
4. Span speak grasp, reclined kick standing, leg down pressure (P. R.) (right span, left speak, left kick).
5. Swim hanging, larynx vibration and stroking.
6. Span speak grasp standing, hip forwards twisting (G. R.) (right span, left speak, left hip).
7. Tumble standing, chest double arch chopping.
8. Stretch stride sitting, chest lift vibration.
9. Heave standing, chest spanning.
10. Half rest twist, high sitting, trunk back falling (G. R.) (right rest, right twist).

This prescription was used for some time with such extraordinary success, that, when the patient's health was perfectly restored, his whole frame (especially his thorax) was so much expanded, that his coat could not be buttoned at all.

We look with awe on this prescription, and at the gymnast who is competent to make it up. As for the gymnast himself our respect

for him is profound ; because he is the first bold quack who has dared to do the right thing by his patients. One of his prescriptions is a chopping or flicking on the nose ; another is a mild administration of the bastinado ; and another is a well regulated verberation on the seat of honour. The principle of discipline laid down by the first Doctor Birch as proper for the cure of serious defects in his young friends, arose in his mind out of the eternal fitness of things, and was an anticipation of the Movement-cure Philosophy. The educational gymnast applies his strokes, P. R. Pupil resists possibly with "kick squeak twist," and the healing of some mental disease is the consequence. The application of this wholesome and proper corrective to his patients is, according to his own description, made by the Professor of the Movement-cure, in manner following :—"Knocking is a percussion made generally on the chine bone by one hand of the gymnast, standing behind the patient, who is in opposite inclined position ; the clenched fist strikes, while the joint of the hand is kept very movable in a curved semicircle, from one trochanter over the glutæi to the chine bone, and thence to the trochanter of the other side ; twenty to thirty knocks completing the curve. The motion of the wrist is very free and easy." (Not a doubt about it !) "After three or four repetitions of the movement in the curved semicircular line, a stroking is made with the palm of the hand on the glutæi and the chine bone ; then the half-circular knocking and stroking are alternately repeated two or three times."

Unphilosophical readers may see in all this an extravagance of quackery. For our own part, we consider the last-quoted prescription to be *the thing* for the P. of the G. ; and a modification of the same formula very fit for the G. himself, the use of the extremity of a boot densely hob-nailed, being substituted for the use of the fist.

Let us be careful how we reject without inquiry these important truths. They are most worthy of dispassionate investigation. The searcher after truth will go to the gymnast for a knocking, and record his experience thereof. He may come out of the experiment a trifle sore ; but what will he not endure in such a cause ? For our own parts, we back gymnast-knocking against spirit-rapping.

Do we not see in the Movement-cure the sole remedy against hurt that arises from almost all mundane complications, whether municipal, national, or cosmical ? Municipal—for look at the Police force, ever crying to society, Move on ! A thief, a member of the swell mob, a disease of civilisation, becomes manifest ; what is the course pursued by the municipal functionary ? Stretch

stride double arm flying shoulder grasp, trunk sideways pulling. G. R.—Gent resists, with trunk forwards twisting, left squat half lying, double leg kick. P. R.—Police officer or Peeler resists. The result is infallibly the removal of the peccant party. We have taken all those terms out of the disquisition on the Movement-cure ; it will be seen how universal is their application. Not universal ? How is it in the political affairs ? There is an obstruction in the body of the state. Something is wrong. What is the remedy ? A Movement-cure. It may be an Education Movement, an Administrative Reform Movement, an Early Closing Movement. The cure is a Movement-cure. Say it is an Administrative Reform Movement. G. (Government) takes this sort of course—we see again the ordained scientific terms—stretch lying with right leg curtseying concentric abdomen stroking, head back flexion and holding. P. R.—Public resists. The public attempts then, High opposite standing, leg forward pulling, with double hand pulling, and double leg pressure. G. R.—Government resists. The end of all this is generally an increased health in the system of the country.

But the Movement-cure is also founded upon a great cosmical principle. What is it but the two movements of the earth by which the seasons are regulated and the order and the harmony of nature are assured ? These movements are strictly gymnastic, take place over a definite space, in a definite course, in a definite time. Perfect gymnastic movements they produce the most magnificent results. The stars are upheld, the planets revolve round the sun, upon the principles applied in the great Movement-cure. The planets as they revolve, tend by their centrifugal force to right stretch into space, but G. R., (gravitation resists), and by this means they are brought round. The sun in its turn applies to each planetary body a centripetal force, and it would be to itself bound standing but P. R., (planet resists), and is by this means ensured regular motions.

When we tell medical readers that atrophy of the heart is said to have been cured in three months by one of these prescriptions in which the chief ingredients were twisting, striding, and chopping ; that such remedies have cured in three months a large inguinal hernia ; consumption in six or eight months, other diseases in proportion, medical readers will know very well how much respect is due to the inventors of this system. No doubt, ere long, we shall be all stride, stride, striding, chop, chop, chopping at our houses at home. We have now mud-cures and movement-cures. Who will establish air-cures and complete the series of burlesques upon sense ?

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GIBBET STREET.

THE Ghetto is for the Jews, and the Fanal for the Greek merchants, the Cannebière for the Marseilles boatmen, and the Montagne Sainte Gèneviève for the rag-pickers. Holywell Street is for the old clothes vendors, Chancery Lane for the lawyers, and Fifth Avenue for the upper Ten Thousand, and GIBBET STREET is for the thieves. They reside there, when in town.

It is an ugly name for a street, and an uglier thing that the street should be a den of robbers; but—with the slightest veil of the imaginatively picturesque so as to wound nobody's sensitive feelings—it exists. Gibbet Street and the thieves—the thieves and Gibbet Street—are as manifest and apparent as the sun at noonday. Gibbet Street is just round the corner. It is only five minutes walk from the office of Household Words. It is within the precincts of the police station and the police courts of Bow Street. It is within an easy walk of the wealthy Strand; with its banking houses, churches, and Exeter Hall. It is not far from the only National Theatre now left to us, where her Majesty's servants are supposed to hold the mirror up to nature nightly; and "veluti in speculum" might be written with more advantage over the entrance to Gibbet Street, than over the proscenium of the playhouse; for vice and its image are in view there at any hour of the day or night: a comfortable sight to see. Gibbet Street is contiguous to where the lawyers have their chambers, and the high Courts of Equity their sittings; and a bencher from Lincoln's Inn might stroll into Gibbet Street in the spare ten minutes before the Hall dinner, and see what nice work is being cut out for the Central Criminal court there; while an inhabitant of Gibbet Street, too lazy to thief that day, might wander into the Inn, and see the Lord High Chancellor sitting, all alive, in his court, and saying that he will take time to consider that little matter which has been under consideration a trifle less than seventeen years. A merry spectacle to view. The Queen herself comes within bowshot of Gibbet Street many times during the fashionable season, when it pleased her to listen to the warblings of her

Royal Italian Opera singers, now to warble no longer in that locality. The tips of the blinkers of her satin-skinned horses were seen from Gibbet Street; the ragged young thieves scampered from it to stare at her emblazoned coaches; and, if one of the ethereal footmen—transcendant being in the laced coat, large cocked hat, bouquets, and golden garters—had but run the risk of a stray splash or two of mud on his silk stocking, or a stray onion at his powdered head, or a passing violence to his refined nose, he might have spent an odd quarter-hour with great profit to himself in Gibbet Street: better, surely, than bemusing himself with beer at the public-house in Bow Street. He would have seen many things. Been eased, probably, of his gold-headed stick, his handkerchief, his aiguillettes, and his buttons with the crown on them; and, on his return, he might have told the sergeant flunkey, or the yeoman footpage, or the esquire shoeblack, or the gentleman stable-boy, of the curious places he had visited. The Lord Great Chamberlain might hear of it eventually. It might come to the ears of Majesty at last. For the first time, I wonder? Is anything of Gibbet Street and its forlorn population known in palatial Pimlico? Perchance: for hard by that palace, too, there are streets full of dens, and dens full of thieves. Do not Hulk Street and Handcuff Row, and Dartmoor Terrace and the Great Ticket-of-Leave Broadway, all about upon Victoria Street, Westminster; and is not that within sight of the upper windows of the palace of Buckingham?

It is plain to me that a thief must live somewhere. He is a man like the rest of us. His head has a cranium, an os frontis, a cerebellum, and an occiput, although it be covered by a fur cap, and decorated with Newgate "aggerwators," instead of a shovel hat or a velvet cap with pearls and strawberry leaves. He is a ragged, deboshed, vicious, depraved, forsaken, hopeless vagabond; but he has a heart; and liver, and lungs: he feels the summer's sun and the winter's ice. If you prick him, he bleeds; if you beat him, he cries out; if you hang him, he chokes; if you tickle him, he laughs. He requires rest, food, shelter—not that I say he deserves them, but he must have them—as

well as the best of citizens and ratepayers. Ferocity, dishonesty, are not the normal state. A lion cannot be always roaring, a bear cannot be always hugging; and, unless you make of every thief a caput lupinum, and shoot him down wherever you find him, he must have his den, his hole, or his corner; his shinbone of beef or his slain antelope. Being human, he is also gregarious; and thus Gibbet Street. If you leave holes, the foxes will come and inhabit them; if you suffer heaps of rubbish to accumulate, the bats and dragonflies will make them their habitation; if you banish the broom from your ceiling-corners, the spiders will come a-building there; if you flush not your sewers, the rats will hold high holiday in them; and if, to make an end of truisms, you are content to bear with rotteness and dirt in the heart of the city that has no equal, on the skirt of your kingly mantle a torn and muddy fringe; if your laws say, Dirt, you are an institution, and Vermin you are vested, and Ignorance you are our brother; if you make and keep up, and sweep and garnish, a Thieves' Kitchen, with as much care and precaution as if it were a diplomatic mission to Ashantee, or a patent place, or an assistant commissionership, why the thieves will come and live in it. Which is the greatest scandal—a house infested with vermin, or the carelessness of the servant who has suffered them to accumulate there? Gibbet Street is a scandal—a burning shame; but it is not half so scandalous or shameful as the governmental dwellers in Armida's garden, who have suffered the foul weeds to grow up; who have yawningly constructed succursal forcing-houses for crime and ignorance, and have had a greenhouse in every gaol, and a conservatory in every Gibbet Street? They may say that it is not for them to interfere: some of them interfere to obstruct national education; others interfere to manufacture pet hypocrites in gorgeous gaols.

I notice that the principal argument of the police before the magistrates, when they wish to put down a penny theatre, a penny dancing saloon, concert hall, or beershop, lies in the fact of the place inculpated being a resort for thieves and the worst of characters. Bless me, good Mr. Superintendents and Inspectors, astute and practical as you are, where are the thieves to go? What are they to do in the small hours? Is the Clarendon open to them? Would they be welcome at the Sacred Harmonie? Would Mr. Albert Smith be glad to see them at the Egyptian Hall? Are their names down for the house dinners at the Garrick or the Carlton? You will have none of them even in your prisons or hulks, but you turn them out with tickets of leave as soon as they have imposed on the chaplain; or as soon as your gamut of reclaiming measures has been drummed over. You empty them on the streets, and then, wall-eyed, moon-

struck Society, holds up its hands and gapes, because astute Superintendent X, practical Inspector Z, tells you that the thieves are gone back to Gibbet Street; that they are "forty thieving like one" at the corner; and that they are careering about with life-preservers, chloroform bottles, crow-bars, and skeleton-keys. Where else should they go? Where *can* they go? "Where!" echo the six hundred and fifty-six slumberers in Armida's Garden, waking up from a sodden trance; "but what a shocking place this Gibbet Street is! We shall really have to move for leave to bring in a bill some day to put it down: meanwhile, let us never, no never, give a thought to the practicability of putting down thieves or thieving by moving one finger, by making one snail's footstep towards the discountenance and destruction of the teeming seed from which crime is grown,"—seed colported and exposed as openly as the nasturtions or ranunculuses in the little brown paper bags in Covent Garden Market; seed that, with our eyes shut, and with a dreamy perseverance in wrong-doing, we continue scattering broadcast over the fields; afterwards spending millions in steam-ploughs of penal laws, and patent thrashing-machines of prison discipline, and improved harrows of legislation, and coercive drains, and criminal subsoiling; all for the furtherance of the goodly gibbet harvest. What is the good of throwing away the cucumber when you have oiled, and vinegared, and peppered, and salted it? Why don't you smash the cucumber-frames? Why don't you burn the seed? Hang me all the thieves in Gibbet Street to-morrow, and the place will be crammed with fresh tenants in a week; but catch me up the young thieves from the gutter and the doorsteps; take Jonathan Wild from the breast; send Mrs. Shepherd to Bridewell, but take hale young Jack out of her arms; teach and wash me this young unkempt vicious colt, and he will run for the Virtue Stakes yet; take the young child, the little lamb, before the great Jack Shepherd, ruddles him and folds him for his own black flock in Hades; give him some soap, instead of whipping him for stealing a cake of brown Windsor; teach him the Gospel, instead of sending him to the treadmill for haunting chapels and purloining prayer-books out of pews; put him in the way of filling shop-tills, instead of transporting him when he crawls on his hands and knees to empty them; let him know that he has a body fit and made for something better than to be kicked, bruised, chained, pinched with hunger, clad in rags or prison grey, or mangled with gaoler's cat; let him know that he has a soul to be saved. In God's name, take care of the children, somebody; and there will soon be an oldest inhabitant in Gibbet Street, and never a new one to succeed him!

It is the thieves that make the place, not the place the thieves. Who offers to build a new Fleet Prison, now arrest on mesne process is abolished? Is not Traitors' Gate bricked up now that acts of attainder are passed no more? Would not the Lord Mayor's state coach be broken up and sold for old rubbish a month after the last Lord Mayoralty? There would be no need for such a place as Gibbet Street, if there were no thieves to dwell in it; but as long as you go hammering parchment act-of-parliament-drums, and beating up for recruits for Satan's Light-fingered Brigade, so long will the Gibbet Street barracks be open, and the Gibbet Street billeting system flourish.

Near a shabby market, full of damaged vegetable stuff, hedged in by gin-shops—a narrow, slimy, ill-paved, ill-smelling, worse-looking street, the majority of the houses private (!) but with a sprinkling of marine-stores, rag-shops, chandlers' and fried-fish warehouses, low-browed, doorless doorways leading to black rotten staircases, or to tainted backyards, where corruption sits on the water-butt, and fever lives like a house-dog in the dust-bin: with shattered windows, the majority of them open with a sort of desperate resolve on the part of the wretched inmates to clutch at least some wandering fragment of pure light and air: this is Gibbet Street. Who said (and said wisely, and beautifully too), that a sun-beam passes through pollution unpolluted? It cannot be true, here, in this abandoned place. If a sunbeam could permeate into the den, I verily believe it would be tarnished and would smell foully before it had searched into the abyss of all this vapour of decay. What manner of men, save thieves, and what manner of women save drudges, bond-servants, yet loving help-mates to their brutal mates, live here? It would be wholesome and profitable for those young ladies and gentlemen who imagine even the modern thief to be a rake, bejewelled, broad-clothed, with his brougham, his park hack and his seraglio, to come and dwell here in Gibbet Street. Ask the police (when they are assured they have a sensible man to deal with, they tell him the plain truth), ask astute Superintendent X, practical Inspector Z, where the swell mob is to be found. They will laugh at you, and tell you that there is no swell mob, now. Well-dressed thieves there are of course; robbers on a great scale; well-educated men of the world; cautious; who live by themselves, or in twos or threes, and in luxury. But the thief, generically speaking, is an ignorant, coarse, brutalised, simple-minded spend-thrift, in spite of his thievish cunning. He is always hiding his head in the sand, like the imbecile ostrich; coming back to hide where there is no concealment, in Gibbet Street after a great robbery, and pounced upon immediately by X the astute, or Z

the practical. The thief is recklessly improvident. His net earnings, like the receipts of an usurer-ridden prodigal are infinitesimally small in proportion to his gross plunder. The thieves' and leaving shops are his bill-discounters. He gorges tripe, and clods, and stickings. He is drunk with laudanum beer and turpentine gin. He pays five hundred per cent. excess for his lodging, his raiment, and his food. He is robbed by his comrades; for there is not always honour among thieves. He is as often obliged to thief for his daily bread, as for the means of indulging his profligacy. There is no work so hard as thieving. Hours of patient watching, waiting, marching, countermarching, flight, skulking, exposure and fatigue have to be passed, for often a reward of three-halfpence. The thief's nerves are always strung to the highest degree of tension; he has no holidays; he is always running away from somebody; always seeking or being sought. The thief is as a man afflicted with a mortal disease. Like a person with disease of the heart, who knows that some day he will stagger and fall, the thief knows he has the great gallows aneurism; that the apoplexy of arrest must come upon him. He knows not when. He gets drunk sometimes and forgets the skeleton; but he knows it must come some day—a skeleton with a glazed hat, a number and letter on his collar, and handcuffs in his pocket.

You need no further picture of Gibbet Street. Walk twenty yards and you can see the place itself—the stones, the gutters, the rags that hang out like banners; and the wretched, pale-faced population: some men's faces swollen by liquor, and some women's from bruises, and some women and men's from both. It is safe enough to go down Gibbet Street in the day-time—at least you are safe enough from personal violence. If you are well-dressed, of course you will be robbed; but, at night, you had better avoid it, though policemen patrol it, and the carriages of the nobility and gentry, who are patronising the theatres, are sometimes stationary at its upper entrance.

I have been acquainted with this Tartarus these dozen years; and, although I am a professional town traveller, and have frequented, of malice prepense, the lowest haunts of some European capitals, I never bestowed much notice upon Gibbet Street. I took it for granted as an abode of thieves, glanced curiously at its low-browed, bull-necked, thick-lipped inhabitants, and buttoned up my coat pockets when I was obliged to pass through it. Lately, however, it so happened, that Gibbet Street and I have been nearer acquaintances; and, curiously, my more intimate knowledge of this home of dishonesty has been due to the fine arts.

My friend Poundbrush—that celebrated but unassuming artist—paints Grecian temples, Egyptian pyramids, Oriental kiosks,

panoramas of the Mediterranean, and bombardments of the Malakhoff tower—occupying many thousand leagues of landscapes and square feet of canvas—at a great atelier or painting-room, spaciouly erected for the purpose, in the very thick of Gibbet Street. How Messrs. Doublet and Coverflats, the accomplished directors of this great scene-painting undertaking, could have selected Gibbet Street as a location for their studio seems, at the first blush, to pass comprehension; but the rent may have been moderate, or the premises convenient, or the situation central; at any rate there they are with thieves to right of them, thieves to left of them, thieves in front of them; volleying oaths and ribaldry all day long.

Under Poundbrush's auspices I have had many opportunities lately of assisting at the At Homes of the Gibbet Street thieves. Their interiors are not by any means difficult of visual access; for their windows are, as I have said, mostly open. Besides, a great portion of their daily business is transacted in the open street. They eat in the street, they drink, fight, smoke, sing, and—when they have a chance—thieve in the street. A very curious contemplation is presented by standing at the window of this studio. Turning your back to the busy painters, who are pursuing a beautiful, humanising art, revelling in fruits and flowers, sunny landscapes, and stately architecture, and then to turn your eyes upon this human dunghill. What have we done to be brought to this strait? Look into the black holes of rooms, cast your eyes upon those ragged heaps where the creatures sleep, hear the men curse, and see them strike the wretched, wretched women.

It was in some of these latter-day contemplations of the thieves in their domesticity in Gibbet Street, that I came to my grand conclusion that the thief is a man—and that he must eat and drink and sleep; and I am gratified to be able to chronicle one little trait of human nature, and that, too, of the kindlier sort. At one o'clock, past meridian, lately, the waiter from some adjacent cookshop was journeying through Gibbet Street (always a North-west passage of great peril and travail to waiters and potboys), and, in his hands, he bore one of those stately pyramids of pewter-covered dishes of meat and potatoes, which none but waiters can balance, or cookshop keepers send out all hot. A thief passing that way—a young thief, probably inexperienced, new to Gibbet Street, who had not yet learnt its code of etiquette—followed the waiter dexterously, and was about to tilt the topmost dish from off the pyramid, with a view to upsetting the whole edifice, scattering the viands, and making off with the contents. I trembled for the result. Two or three half-naked boys and a hungry dog of most dishonest appearance, watched the proceedings with anxious eyes.

The nefarious purpose had nearly been accomplished, when there issued, suddenly from a doorway, a tall robber—a black-whiskered Goliath. He, espying the intention of the juvenescent footpad, suddenly cast him into the kennel; thus allowing the waiter with his savoury cargo to pass safely by: and roughly shaking the youth, cried out, "What are you up to? Don't yer know, yer fool! Them's for Painting Room!"

What was this? Was it reverence for art, or can there be really some honour among thieves, some hidden good in this wretched Gibbet Street?

THE BRITISH DERVISH.

RICHARD BURTON—educated at an English public school, and Trinity College, Oxford; a lieutenant in the Bombay army, tall, dark, with Oriental eyes and beard that a Persian might envy; a taste for travel which no amount of misery could quell, a special master of the Arabic, Persian, Hindoostani, and Turkish languages; versed in magic and mesmerism; with an aptitude for imitation that would make the fortune of an actor—determined some three years ago, to penetrate into the sacred temples of Mohammedanism never before seen or described by any Christian. One of the few mysteries which the age of railways and steamboats, revolvers and photographs, has not explored.

On the evening of April the third, eighteen hundred and fifty-three, a Persian prince embarked on board the Bengal; for, on such a dangerous errand, our traveller could not begin his disguise too soon. A fortnight on board was industriously spent in practising the habits and ceremonies of common life that distinguish the Moslem from the Giaour; the Oriental from the European. "Look, for instance, at an Indian Moslem drinking a glass of water. The operation is simple enough, but includes no less than five novelties. In the first place, he clutches his tumbler as though it were the throat of a foe; secondly, he ejaculates, 'In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful,' before wetting his lips; thirdly, he imbibes the contents, swallowing it, not drinking, and ending with a satisfied grunt; fourthly, before setting down the cup, he sighs forth, 'Praise be to Allah;' and fifthly, he replies, 'May Allah make it pleasant to thee,' in answer to a friend's polite 'Pleasantly and health.' He is also careful to avoid the irreligious action of drinking the pure element in a standing position."

Landing in Egypt with a shaven head and full beard,—exclaiming, as true believers do on all occasions of concluding actions, "Al-hamdulillah," meaning, "Praise to the Lord of the (three) worlds,"—the spectators, a motley mob, murmured "Moslem!" and, if

any doubts existed, they were quelled when a little boy who exclaimed "bakshish," got for answer, "Matish!"—I have nothing for you.

Lodged in an old house, our hadji lost no time in securing the services of a shaykh; a sort of reverend Moslem grinder, with whom he plunged into the intricacies of the Faith; revived his recollections of religious ablution; read the Koran, and again became an adept in the art of prostration. His leisure hours were employed in attending bazaars, and in shopping.

Being versed in medicine, as well as magic, and mesmerism, our pilgrim assumed the character of a dervish and doctor, and took a third-class passage on the Little Astmalie steamer, plying on the canal between Alexandria and Cairo. On board this boat he made the acquaintance of Khudabakhsh, a shawl-merchant from Lahore; who, after trading in London and Paris, and taking a pilgrimage to wash away the sins of civilised lands, had settled at Cairo. He was a gentleman with a sooty complexion, lank black hair, with an eternal smile and treacherous eyes. He also made a friend of a very worthy fellow, one Hadji Wali.

Arrived at Bulac, or Old Cairo, the Indian merchant insisted that the dervish should make his house his home; and there he spent a fortnight; until, quite wearied out with the civilisation tricks of his host, and with the perpetual sociality; the peculiarity of Eastern life, which never leaves a guest alone one moment, even when sleeping. Therefore, from the Indian's country house our British dervish moved to a wakalah, or caravanserai; where, for the unusually high charge (it being the pilgrim season) of about fourpence a-day, paid in advance for a month, he got possession of two rooms, with a covered verandah, looking on a hollow square. The staircases were high, narrow, exceedingly dirty, and dark at night; with a goat or donkey tethered on the different landings. At these lodgings the pilgrim again met with Hadji Wali, who became his fast friend; and, by his advice after a long deliberation about choice of nations, he became a Pathan, "born of Afghan parents in India, educated at Rangoon, and sent out to wander, according to the custom of men of that race." His knowledge of Persian, Hindoostani, and Arabic were sufficient to pass muster; any trifling inaccuracies being charged on his long residence at Rangoon. This was an important step; for it seems that, in the East, as in the West, the first question put to the traveller is, What is thy name, and the second, Whence comest thou? He assumed the polite pliant manner of an Indian physician, and the dress of a small effendi (gentleman) still representing himself as a dervish, and frequenting the places where dervishes congregated.

Having thus settled his position, our pilgrim began to practise, gratuitously, on poor people; until, his fame spreading, he rose

to be called in to great dignitaries, their seraglios, and female slaves, on whom he practised with great success, not drugs only, but charms, after the modes of animal magnetisers. Thus he acquired the character of the Sahib Nafas, or minor saint. After many trials of candidates for his service, the pilgrim at last settled on an Indian boy, Shaykh Nur, who was anxious to return to his parents at Mecca. Having a swarthy skin and chubby features, the youth was always taken for an Abyssinian slave, which favoured his master's disguise. He served well, was amenable to discipline, and so entirely dependent, that he was less likely to watch too closely the proceedings of the disguised traveller. At the same time, brave at Cairo, he was a coward at El-Medinah; despised by the Arabs for his effeminacy, and at all times unable to keep his hands from picking and stealing.

The next care at Cairo was to obtain a shaykh or theological teacher, such as the dervish has read with in Alexandria, under pretence that the Indian doctor wanted to read Arabic works on medicine. His Caireen teacher was Shaykh Mohammed-el-Attar, or the Druggist; a gentleman who had once known better days as a preacher in one of Mohammed Ali's mosques; but, having been dismissed, was obliged to fall back upon "A hole pierced in the wall of a house, about five feet long and six feet deep, divided into two compartments separated by a thin partition of wood, communicating by a kind of arch cut in the boards—the inner box a store-house, as a pile of empty old baskets shows. In the front was displayed the stock in trade—a matting full of Persian tobacco, and pipe bowls of red clay, a palm-leaf bag containing vile coffee and large lumps of coarse whitey-brown sugar wrapped in browner paper. On the shelves and ledges were rows of well-thumbed wooden boxes, labelled, with the greatest carelessness, pepper for rhubarb, arsenic for wash-clay, and sulphate of iron where sal ammoniac should be. There also was a square case containing, under lock and key, small change, choice articles of commerce, damaged perfumes, bad antimony for the eyes, and pernicious rouge. Dangling close above a pair of ill-poised scales, to hooks over the shop-front, were suspended reeds for pipes, tallow candles, dirty wax tapers; instead of plate-glass windows, a ragged net keeps away flies and thieves, when the master went out to recite in the mosque his daily Ya Sin." When the pupil climbed up the little shop for the purpose of receiving a lesson, Shaykh Mohammed was quite at his ease; reading when he liked, and generally beginning each lecture with some such preamble as this: "Ayna aywar aywa, Even so, even so, even so, we take refuge with Allah from the stoned fiend. In the name of Allah the compassionate, the merciful; and the blessings of Allah upon our

Lord Mohammed, and his family, and his companions, one and all! Thus saith the Author, May Almighty Allah have mercy upon him! Section one of chap. two upon the orders of prayer, &c."

Oriental like, he revelled in giving good counsel. "Thou art always writing, O my brave; what evil habit is this? Surely thou hast learned it in the lands of the Frank. Repent!" He loathed the English practitioner giving advice gratis. "Thou hast two servants to feed, O my son! The doctors of Egypt never write A.B. without reward. Better go and sit upon the mountain at once, and say thy prayers day and night." He delighted, also, in abruptly interrupting a serious subject when it began to weigh upon his spirits. For instance, "Now the waters of ablution being of seven different kinds, it results that—Hast thou a wife? No? Then verily thou must buy thee a female slave, O youth! This conduct is not right, and men will say of thee—'Repentance, I take refuge with Allah; of a truth, his mouth watereth for the spouses of other Moslems.'"

Passing our pilgrim's description of the great Mohammedan ceremony and fast of the Ramazan, and of his medical practice and private visits in Cairo, we come to his preparations for the desert-journey. He began by purchasing tea, coffee, rice, loaf sugar, dates, biscuit, oil, vinegar, tobacco, and cooking utensils; a small bell-shaped tent, costing twelve shillings, and three water-skins for the desert. The provisions were placed in a kafas, or hamper artistically made of palm-sticks, and in a huge saharrah, or wooden box, about three feet each way, covered with leather and provided with a small lid fitting into the top. The hamper, with a pea-green box ornamented with yellow flowers (the dervish's medicine-chest) and saddle-bags full of clothes, hung on one side of the camel, balanced by the huge saharrah, Bedouins always requiring a tolerably equal balance of weight.

The next business was to get a passport. One after much difficulty, was obtained through an Aghan Shaykh, for five piastres paid to the officials, which certified the pilgrim to be Abdullah, the son of Yusuf (Joseph), originally from Cabool, and described his person. After receiving it, Abdullah took an opportunity of slipping three dollars into the hands of the poor Aghan divine to whom he was indebted for his character.

The dervish Abdullah unfortunately lost his pious character in a wrestling and drinking bout with an Albanian captain, which we cannot stop to describe. Having, then, arranged with Shaykh Nassar, a Bedouin of Tur (Mount Sinai), for the hire of two dromedaries from Cairo to Suez, he sent on his Indian boy and heavy luggage two days before. On the day of departure, the Be-

douin, at three o'clock, announced that the dromedaries were saddled. Abdullah stuck a pistol in his belt, passed the crimson silk cord of his pocket Koran over his shoulder in token of being a pilgrim, distributed a few presents to friends and servants, mounted the camel, crossed his legs before the pommel, and rode out of the huge gateway of the caravanseraï, while all the bystanders, except the porter—who took him to be a Persian heretic, and had seen him with the drunken Albanian—exclaimed: "Allah bless thee, O! pilgrim, and restore thee to thy country and thy friends!"

Passing through the city gate, he addressed the salutation of peace to the sentry and officer commanding the guard, who both gave him God speed! with great cordiality. Here his theological tutor and Hadji Wali, his acquaintance on board the steamer, who had accompanied him so far, took leave. The pilgrim acknowledges a tightening of the heart as their honest faces faded in the distance. But there was no time for emotion. The pace had to be quickened; the Bedouin shaykh appeared inclined to take the lead. This was a trial of manliness. The pilgrim kicked his beast into a trot; the Bedouins, with a loud, ringing laugh, attempted to give him the go-by; and then away they went at full speed into the desert, like school-boys; with an eighty-four mile ride before them and an atmosphere like a furnace blast. Presently they dropped into a more reasonable pace. The Bedouins prepared to smoke: they filled the traveller's chibouque, lit it with a flint and steel, and passed it over to him. After a few puffs, he returned it to them, and they smoked by turns. Then the Bedouins began to wile away time by asking questions; by talking about victuals—for the ever-hungry Bedouins talk of food, as aldermen do of money and port wine; and, lastly, they took refuge in droning plaintive songs, of which the burdens are bright verdure, cool shades, and bubbling rills. The day closed with an adventure which added to the party, a Meccan boy named Mohammed-Basyuni.

Next day our dervish had an adventure with a party of Magrabi pilgrims; who first begged water and bread for charity, and then, encouraged by kindness, threatened violence, but were put down by the sight of a pistol, and certain fierce gestures. There was no real danger for a determined man. Mohammed Ali has made the Suez road as safe as any out of London.

Numerous parties of Turks, Arabs, Affghans, and a few Indians on the same errand of pilgrimage, were passed; all welcoming the travellers with a friendly salutation. Toward evening the party came in sight of Suez and a strip of glorious blue sea. It was night when they passed the tumbling

gateway of the town. Declining an invitation to share supper and dormitory from a party of El-Medinah men, friends of Mohammed—who were returning to the pilgrimage, after a begging tour through Egypt and Turkey—our dervish obtained an empty room, and spread his carpet. The eighty-four mile ride had made every bone ache; every inch of skin exposed to the sun being baked or blistered. So, lamenting the ill effects of four years' ease in Europe, and disquieted about the non-arrival of Nur with his baggage, he fell into an uncomfortable sleep.

The following day was spent in recovering the impediments with which fate had already crossed the journey. The Indian servant had disappeared under circumstances that looked very like an intention to abscond with pack and baggage; but, being defeated in his enterprising project, he turned up humble and penitent. At Suez, our pilgrim formed his party. First, came Omar Effendi, a Circassian by descent, the grandson of a mufti at El-Medinah, and the son of a Shaykh Rahl, an officer whose duty it is to lead dromedary caravans. Omar with the look of fifteen, owned to twenty-eight, dressed respectably, prayed regularly, and hated the fair sex. Having been urged by his parents to marry, to avoid the infliction, and obtain leisure for study, he had fled from home, and entered himself as a pauper student at the Mosque Azhar, at Cairo. The disconsolate parent sent as confidential servant, a negro, called Saad, otherwise El-Jinni the Devil, to bring him home—the second of our company. The third, Shaykh Hammid-el-Lamman, was the descendant of a celebrated El-Medinah saint and clarified butter-seller, Hammid, a perfect specimen of a town Arab, squatted all day on a box full of presents for the daughter of his paternal uncle, that being the genteel way of expressing wife in that district. The last, Salih Shahkar, a Turk on his father's, an Arab on his mother's side, supercilious as the one, avaricious as the other, stretched on a carpet, smoking a Persian kalioon, prayed more frequently, and dressed more respectably than the El-Medinah saint's descendant; he looked sixteen, and had the selfish ideas of forty.

All these persons lost no time in opening the question of a loan. They had twelve days' voyage and four days' journey before them, boxes to carry, custom-houses to face, stomachs to fill; yet the whole party could scarcely muster a couple of dollars of ready money. Their boxes were full of valuables, consisting of arms, clothes, pipes, slippers, and sweet-meats; but nothing short of starvation would have induced them to pledge the smallest article. Foreseeing the advantage of such a good company of companions, our pilgrim hearkened favourably to their requests. To the boy Mo-

ammed picked up in the desert, he lent six dollars, Hammid about five pounds—at his house at El-Medinah the lender determined to lodge; Omar Effendi three dollars; Saad the Devil, two; and Salih Shahkar fifty piastres. But, knowing the customs of the country, and the danger of being generous, where generosity is a word unknown, the dervish took care to take, from the first arms, two rich coats from the second, a handsome pipe from the third, a yataghan from the fourth, and from the fifth an imitation cachemere shawl. All this was done under written agreement, in which the Dervish, to keep up his Indian character, insisted on the most usurious terms of interest, with the prudent view of earning a character for liberality and handsome dealing on settling day.

The consequence of this transaction was, that the creditor suddenly found himself a person of consequence; precedence was forced on him, his opinion was consulted, and concurrence asked, before any project was settled. But this sudden elevation led him into an imprudence, and aroused the only suspicion ever expressed about him in the course of his summer's trip. He says, "My friends had looked at my clothes, overhauled my medicine-chest, criticised my pistols, sneered at my English watch, disguised in a copper case with a face properly stained and figured with Arab numerals; I remembered having seen a compass at Constantinople, therefore imagined they would think little about a sextant. This was a mistake; the boy Mohammed only waited my leaving the room to declare the would-be Hadji was one of the infidels from India, and a council sat to discuss the case. Fortunately for me, Omar Effendi had looked over a letter which I had written to Hadji Wali, of Cairo, that morning, and had at various times received precise answers to certain questions he had put to me on high theology. He therefore flatly contradicted the boy; and Shaykh Hammid, who looked forward to being my host, guide, and debtor, in general, swore that the light of Islam was upon my countenance, and consequently that the boy Mohammed was a pauper, a fakir, an owl, a cut-off one, and Wahabi, for daring to impugn the faith of a brother believer. The scene ended with a general abuse of the Arabian gamin, who was told, in chorus, that he had no shame, and to fear Allah. But, struck with the expression of his friends' countenances, when they saw the sextant, Abdullah determined, with a sigh, to leave it behind, and prayed five times a-day for nearly a week.

The delay at Suez was got through—in spite of the plagues of Egypt—tolerably pleasantly; between gossiping, bathing, and joking a band of female Egyptian pilgrims, sometimes with, Marry me, O Fattmah, O daughter, O female pilgrim; at others, O old woman, O

decrepit, O only fit to carry wood to market! ending with a rush out of the way of the furious dames, when gibes wound them up to a pitch of fury. At length, with the help of Saad the Devil, who cheated everybody and entered himself free in the ship's books (if it had any) as an able-bodied seaman, they embarked on board the Silk-el-Rahab, or the Golden Wire, of about fifty tons burden, with narrow wedge-like bows, a clean water-line, a sharp keel, undecked except upon a lofty poop, with two masts imminently raking forward—the main considerably larger than the mizen, the former alone provided with a huge triangular latine, very deep in the tack—with no means of reefing, no compass, no log, no sounding line, no chart. Probably the same kind of model that carried Sesostriis across the Red Sea to Dire. Ninety-seven passengers had been packed by the greedy owner in the hold, within the space for sixty; and the poop was occupied by pilgrims, who had unlawfully taken possession of the space belonging to Abdullah the British Dervish and his select band of debtors.

The first thing the passengers did, after gaining standing-room, was to fight for more room; which of course meant greater comfort. After a preliminary combat below, in which five men were completely disabled, the Magrabis summoned the crowded party on the poop to relieve their difficulties by taking half-a-dozen of the savage sons of the desert amongst them. Thereupon, Saad the Devil rose, with an oath, from the corner where he had been lying ready for the occasion, and threw amongst his friends a bundle of nebbut, goodly ashen staves, six feet long, thick as a man's wrist, well greased and seasoned, shouting, "Defend yourselves, if you don't wish to be the meat of the Magrabis!" and to the enemy, "Dogs, and sons of dogs! now shall you see what the children of the Arab are!" The dervish and his debtors rising too, each grasping one of the staves, shouted, "I am Abdullah, the son of Joseph!" "I am Omar of Daghistan!" &c. The enemy swarmed toward the poop like angry hornets, with cries of Allah Akbar! But the poop gave a vantage of about four feet to the pilgrim's party, and the attempt to scale and overpower by numbers, failed miserably. Abdullah the son of Joseph, under the influence of old English notions, began at first with gentle blows; but it soon became evident that the Magrabis' heads could bear, and did require, the utmost exertion of strength. A manœuvre worthy of a great general ended the fray. When at its hottest, the crafty dervish, by a sly, smart push of his shoulder, sent a huge earthen jar full of water rolling down on the fierce swarm of Africans. A shrill shriek arose above the din. Bruised, scratched, wetted, and in awful fear that worse might be behind, the Magrabis retreated. A few

minutes afterwards a deputation of the Brown Burnouses, soliciting peace, was received in grave silence by our pilgrim's party on the poop, which was granted. Heads, shoulders, and hands, were penitentially kissed; and thus ended the fray, in which the meek Omar was by far the fiercest of the party.

The next adventure in favour of the British Dervish was, when the Golden Wire imprudently anchored on a sand-bank at high water, and was left high and dry by the ebb. The Magrabis, who had disembarked, had been vainly pushing and shouting; and pushing again; then praying and offering up burnt coffee for want of incense; and Shaykh Hammid had rashly begged the assistance of his saintly ancestor the clarified butter-seller, and all were in despair, when Abdullah the son of Joseph, whose morning had been passed sitting quietly upon the sands—watching for the rising of the tide, seeing the Golden Wire show some signs of unsteadiness, rose up, walked gravely up to her, authoritatively ranged the pilgrims around her, with their shoulders to the sides, and told them to heave with might and main, when they should hear him invoke the name of a great Indian saint. As the water washed and watted round the stern, he raised his hands and voice: "Yan Piran Pir! Ya Abd-el-Kader Jilani!" And, every Magrabi heaving together with a will, the Golden Wire canted half over; and, sliding heavily through the sand, floated once more in deep water. For a day or two the Anglo-Indian dervish and doctor was greatly respected for his small miracle.

At length, not without peril from want of the commonest tackle of a sailing vessel, the Golden Wire reached Zambu, the port of El-Medinah. After the usual stay for refreshment and preparation, the Dervish Abdullah and his friends started again under the charge of Bedouins, from whom he had hired camels. The little party consisted of twelve camels. They travelled in Indian file, head tied to tail, with the valiant Omar Effendi as out-rider, mounted on a dromedary with showy trappings, in honour of his rank; Amru Jemal, a native of El-Medinah on his way home, rode first of the file; then our friend Abdullah; and the rest of the party behind, dozing upon rough platforms made by the lids of two large boxes slung to the sides of their camels. There were rumours at Zambu that the Nazimi tribe were out, and that travellers passing that way had to fight for their lives and purses every day; so all the party except Omar, in token of poverty, dressed themselves in their coarsest and dirtiest clothes—for the most part, no more than a ragged shirt and a bit of rag round the head, short chibouques without mouth-pieces, and tobacco-pouches of greasy leather. They all became silent—even Saad the Devil—

as they advanced, fearful for themselves and their property. Their two guides and camel-drivers were of the tribe of Beni-Hart, which has kept its blood pure for thirteen centuries. They are small chocolate-coloured beings, stunted and thin, with mops of coarse bristly hair, burned brown by the sun, shaggy beards, vicious eyes, frowning brows, screaming voices, well-made, fleshless limbs clad in ragged shirts, indigo-dyed, with kerchiefs twisted round their heads, and sandals on their feet, armed one with a matchlock and a sabre in a leathern scabbard, the other with a quarter-staff, and the Arab's invariable companion, a dagger. These ragged fellows would eat with the traveller and ask for more, but were too proud to work; no promise of backshish would induce them to assist even in pitching a tent. With the pilgrim party also marched about two hundred camels carrying grain, with an escort of seven irregular Turkish cavalry.

When, after many rumours, the pilgrims, swollen by other parties, had marched into the Pilgrims' Pass—an ill-famed gorge—thin blue curls of smoke rose from a high precipitous cliff on the left, and instantly the loud sharp cracks of the hillmen's rifles rang in the air. In the ensuing fusillade five of the Albanian escort were killed, beside camels and beasts of burden, while the robbers, snugly sheltered behind breastworks on the cliffs, were safe and unassailable. With this loss the caravan scrambled through the pass.

At length, after ten days and nights of toil and drought, they passed a dry valley celebrated by Arab poets for its greenness, climbed a flight of steps roughly cut in scoriaceous basalt, and a full view of El-Medinah opened before them. "We halted our beasts as if by word of command. All of us alighted, jaded and hungry as we were, to feast our eyes with a view of the Holy City, crying, 'O, Allah! this is the sanctuary of the Prophet; make it a protection from hell-fire and a refuge from eternal punishment! O, open the gates of thy mercy, and let us pass through them to the land of joy.' And again: 'Live for ever, O most excellent of Prophets! live in the shadow of happiness during the hours of night and the times of day, whilst the bird of the tamarisk moaneth like the childless mother, whilst the west wind bloweth gently over the hills of Nejd, and the lightning flasheth bright over the firmament of El-Hejaz.'"

After a few minutes' rest the pilgrims remounted; and, as they proceeded towards the city, they found that the way was crowded with an eager multitude coming out to meet the caravan. The men of El-Medinah preferred walking, for the better convenience of kissing, embracing, and shaking hands with relatives and friends. An old lady's younger son wept aloud for joy as he ran round his mother's camel, he standing on tiptoe, she bending

double in vain attempts to exchange a kiss. Friends and comrades greeted each other, regardless of rank or fortune, with affectionate embraces and gestures, which neither party seemed to think of answering. Inferiors saluted superiors by attempting to kiss hands which were violently snatched away, while mere acquaintance cordially shook hands, and then raising the finger-tips to their lips, kissed them with apparent relish. Our dervish proceeded down a broad dusty street, past many ruinous houses, over a bridge composed of a single arch of roughly-hewn stones, spanning the bed of a torrent, and so on to the residence of Shaykh Hammid; to whom, with wise foresight, he had lent five pounds at Suez. The shaykh had gone on early in the morning to prepare for making a guest of his creditor, and to receive the shrill cries and congratulations of his mother and wife; which it is not etiquette for a stranger to hear. After the camels had knelt at his door for full five minutes Hammid came out, but perfectly metamorphosed from the ragged wretch of Suez. Shaved and bathed, a muslin turban of goodly size bound round an embroidered cap fitting close to his smooth poll; his moustachios and beard neatly trimmed; the dirty, torn, rope-bound shirt exchanged for a jubbah, or outer cloak of light pink merino; a long-sleeved caftan of rich flowered stuff; a fine shirt; a plaid-pattern silk sash wound round his body; pantaloons of striped silk; his bare, sunburnt feet, thoroughly purified, encased in tight Cordovan socks and Constantinople papooshes of bright lemon colour. In one of his now delicate hands, the shaykh bore a mother-of-pearl rosary—a token of his piety; in the other, a handsome pipe, with jasmine stick and amber mouth-piece. From his waist dangled a tobacco-pouch—from the bosom of his coat his purse, both of broadcloth, richly embroidered with gold. With his dress, the manners of the shaykh had changed from the vulgar and boisterous to staid courtesy. He took his guest's hand, never dreaming that he was thus honouring an infidel Giaour, led him to the place of sitting, which was swept and garnished for receiving company.

Behind followed the impudent Mohammed, in his rags, thoroughly ashamed at finding himself in such genteel company, and who, most unhappy, squeezed himself into a corner. The pipe stood ready filled, the divans spread, and the coffee was boiling on a brazier in the passage, ready for the friends expected to call on the traveller to welcome his return. Scarcely had Abdullah Effendi taken his place on the best seat in the room at the cool window-sill, when guests poured in, and the shaykh rose to welcome and embrace them. "They sat down, smoked, chatted politics, asked questions, drank coffee; and, after half-an-hour's visit, rose abruptly, and, exchanging embraces once more, departed. To the strangers, succeeded a swarm of children,

treading upon our toes, pulling to pieces everything they could lay their hands on, and using language that would have alarmed an old man-of-war's man. One urchin, scarcely three years old, told me that his father had a sword at home with which he would cut my throat from ear to ear, suiting the action to the word; because I objected to his perching on my wounded foot. By a few taunts I made the little fellow almost mad with rage; opening his enormous round black eyes to their utmost stretch, he looked at me and licked his knee, a sign that he would have my heart's blood, and then caught up one of my loaded pistols—fortunately it was upon half-cock—and clapped it to his neighbour's head. Then a serious, majestic boy, about six years years old, with an inkstand in his belt, in token of his literary destination, seized my pipe, and began to smoke it with huge puffs. I ventured laughingly to compare his person to the pipe-stick, when he threw it upon the ground in furious anger. These boys are spoiled, scolded, and never whipped. They were, however, manly boys. They punched one another like little Anglo-Saxons; and, out of the house, fought with sticks and stones. Before deigning to look at anything else, they examined our weapons; as if eighteen years, instead of five, had been the general age."

All this time the patience of our friend Abdullah was nearly exhausted; and at length, to the horror of the boy Mohammed, he broke through all the rules of Arab politeness, by saying plainly that he was hungry, thirsty, sleepy, and wanted to be alone. The good-natured shaykh, who was preparing to go out to pray at his father's grave, immediately brought breakfast, lighted a pipe, spread a bed, darkened the room, turned out the children, and left him to himself.

The following is a sketch of the daily life at El-Medinah: "At dawn we rose, washed, prayed, and broke our fast upon a crust of stale bread before smoking a pipe and drinking a cup of coffee. Then it was time to dress, to mount and visit one of the harems—holy places outside the city. Returning before the sun became intolerable, we sat together, with conversation, pipes, coffee, and cold water perfumed with mastich smoke, wiled away the time until, at eleven in the forenoon, the meal called El-Ghada was served in a large copper tray sent from the upper apartments. Ejaculating Bismillah! we all sat round it, and dipped equal hands in the dishes set before us—unleavened bread, different kinds of meat and vegetable stews; at the end of the first course plain boiled rice, eaten with spoons, then fruits, fresh dates, grapes and pomegranates. After dinner, on pretext of a siesta, or the being a sawdawi, or person of melancholy temperament, I used to have a rug spread in a dark passage, and lie reading, writing notes sily, smoking, and dozing

there the worst part of the day. Then came the hour of receiving and paying visits. The evening prayers ensued, either at home or in the harem; then Asha, or supper—a substantial meal like the dinner, but more plentiful. In the evening occasionally we sallied out for adventures, dressed in common clothes, shouldered nebbut, and went to the café. Usually we sat upon mattresses spread before the shaykh's door, receiving evening visits, chatting, telling stories, making merry until bed-time."

The account of the sacred mosques, tombs, and prayer-places of El-Medinah we omit; noting only that our traveller, rigorously exact in all ceremonies, inscribed in pencil on the wall of the dome of the Prophet's Broken Teeth, in Arabic characters:—

Abdullah, the servant of Allah, (A. H. 1269).

At length came the time for leaving in great haste with the Damascus caravan. The preparations were serious for passing a desert where there would be no water for three days. The dervish did not disdain to patch his water-skins damaged by the rats. The Indian Nur set about obtaining provisions for fourteen days, wheat flour, rice, turmeric, onions, dates, unleavened bread, cheese, limes, tobacco, sugar, tea, and coffee. A bargain was next struck with Masud of the Rahlah, a sub-family of the Hamidah family of Beni Hart; a short, thin, well-built old man, with regular features, a white beard, and a cool eye, who came with a dignified demeanour, pressed the palm of his right hand on the pilgrim's, declined a pipe, took coffee, and after much discussion agreed to find two camels with water, and accompany to Arafat and back, in consideration of twenty dollars, half in advance, and food for the Bedouin and his son, Hamid. The host then addressed our pilgrim in flowery praises of the old Bedouin, after exclaiming—

"Thou wilt treat these friends well, O Masud the Harbi!"

Whereon the old man answered, with grave dignity, designating the pilgrim by his most prominent feature.

"Even as Abu Shawarib (the Father of Moustachios), behaveth to us, so will we behave to him."

When the Bedouins left, Shaykh Hammid strongly recommended his friend Abdullah to give them plenty to eat, and never to allow twenty-four hours to pass, without dipping a hand in the same dish with them! At length, preparations were concluded, debts paid, presents made, our dervish forgave Hammid the five pounds lent at Suez, in consideration of his kindness. The prayers of departure were repeated under the shaykh's direction, and very beautiful it is, and the traveller lay down about two in the morning to sleep, until the gun announced that the caravan was under way. And so he departed safely, after he had

seen, drawn, and made plans and descriptions of all the sacred Moslem mysteries of El-Medinah without detection.

CHIP.

GOLD MINES AT HOME.

THERE is a legend that Queen Boadicea obtained gold in Essex. Cunobeline, Prince of the Trinobantes, coined at Camelo-dunum gold obtained from a mine in Essex. Can this be Shakespeare's Cymbeline, the father of Imogen? There are traces that nuggeting took place from time to time; but as the Norman kings claimed all gold and silver found as royal property, people either kept their own counsel or abstained from any ardent search. But the various edicts passed show that the existence of gold and silver, both pure and combined with other metals, was known and believed in; or else, why issue edicts? In the reign of Edward the First, and for a hundred years after, there was a wonderful interest spread abroad about gold and silver mining; but, towards the period of Richard the Second, alchemy was very rife, and the search after the philosopher's stone, and the transmutation of metals, caused the search after gold and silver mines to abate. It is curious to trace how different pursuits act and react upon each other. Many of the alchemists did really produce both gold and silver, as the result of these labours; and this happened from their working with metals with which gold and silver were combined, although in a shape that was not discernible in their natural state. The old alchemists worked much with lead and tin, metals that often contain precious ore. The production of gold and silver by alchemy was a fact recognised both by the Church and the legislature. The Church anathematised the practice first, and the legislature afterwards made it penal, as a branch of felony. Moses Stringer says, that in the reign of Richard the Second, "after Raymond Lully and Sir George Ripley had so largely multiplied gold, the Lords and Commons, conceiving some danger that the Regency, having such immense treasures at command, would be above asking the aid of the subject, and become too arbitrary and tyrannical, made an act against multiplying gold and silver and made it death to attempt it, or to use such tools, instruments, vessels, or furnaces, as were then used in such operations."

This affords a curious glimpse into the credulity of our ancestors, and the jealousy of the English people about money matters. Henry the Sixth countenanced alchemy, in spite of the edict of his grandfather; but it was not always a dead letter, for a man named Eden was found guilty, on his own confession, of "practising to make the philosopher's stone," and was, without doubt, executed accord-

ingly. The Regent Duke of Bedford took the opportunity of the minority of Henry the Sixth to grant himself the monopoly of all the gold and silver mines in England for twelve years: a proof they were considered something worth having. The mining department was regularly organised in the reign of Henry the Sixth: Robert Burton was appointed Controller of Mines of Gold, silver, copper, aurichalc, and lead, and of mines containing any gold or silver.

The curious may find a half-burnt and otherwise mutilated MS. in the Cottonian Library in the British Museum, a summary of writs and records relating to gold mines, which was drawn up in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The discovery of America for a time withdrew attention from the gold mines in England; but the reign of Elizabeth was remarkable for its schemes, speculations, adventures, and joint-stock companies. In the seventh year of her reign she granted patents to Cornelius Deody, Daniel Rochester, and other foreigners, and Thomas Thurland, to seek for gold, silver, quicksilver, and ores containing them, in eight picked counties in England and Wales, and in the pale of Ireland. Another scheme of hers was surreptitiously to work the gold mines belonging to the King of Scotland, which were more fertile than any in England. In the reign of Henry the Seventh of England, and in those of James the Third and Fourth of Scotland, the mines of Lanarkmoor yielded above three hundred thousand pounds sterling. Still gold-mining has never been any great source of national wealth in England; they have always been royal perquisites and monopolies; but many curious characters and incidental traits of the social life and civilisation of that period may be gathered, and whatever has occupied the attention and energy of the public is a matter of interest.

The search after gold has been a prophetic instinct in all ages; but the hidden treasure was an open secret which "men's eyes were held that they should not see" until within the last few years. There are curious gleanings of biography amongst these mining adventurers. Bushel was secretary to Lord Bacon (who had a great taste for mining), and the scene of Bushel's labours was in Monmouthshire, where the mines yielded as much as two thousand pounds sterling a month profit. Bushel was a great royalist; and, in the beginning of the parliamentary wars, he supplied Charles the First with lead for shot, and with silver that was coined in Wales; also he clothed a great body of troops, advanced a considerable loan, and defended Lundy Island, of which he was the governor. Cromwell treated him well; but his mining speculations languished, and, in the reign of Charles the Second, he was in prison for debt, which was the usual way in which royal gratitude evinced itself in that reign. He was at length released, and attempted

also to obtain repayment of the money advanced to Charles the First; but, as that would have involved something like a suspension of the laws of Nature, he received instead a mining grant, for which he had to raise his own capital. He endeavoured to stimulate the public to subscribe by issuing gold medals of his master and patron, Lord Bacon, and prospectuses of the Baconian mode of mining. But he never did any more good, either to himself or to anybody else.

Sir Hugh Myddleton, whose name is associated with the New River, gained much of his money by the silver mines of Merionethshire, which were leased to him in the reign of James the First. In the reign of William the Third, Boyle obtained several acts modifying the former edicts relating to mines, and to the refining of metals, and the extraction of gold and silver from them. The reign of Queen Anne was rife with joint-stock companies and speculations; and some of the prospectuses, with their alluring calculations, would do credit to our own railway days. In the reigns of the two first Georges there was a mania for silver mining. In the reign of George the Third the gold mines in Wicklow were discovered, and a general impression of abundance of gold prevailed; but the workings were not profitable, the excitement subsided, and the gold was forgotten. In eighteen hundred and twenty-five there was a mania for foreign mining, which was unprofitable and disastrous to the speculators, and the very name of gold mine became synonymous with ruin. Since eighteen hundred and thirty, however, gold-working in England has been resumed with some partial activity; the gold localities have been ascertained over a considerable district, and have been formally acknowledged by the ordnance surveyors; so the sanguine may still hope that the old popular superstition, of London streets being paved with gold, may yet be realised.

THE HOLY WELL.

HIDDEN in a deep wood-hollow,
Girt about with ancient trees,
Where the mocking echoes follow
In the track of every breeze,
Lies the Holy Well.
Hoary stones up-heaped around it,
Worn and mossed with age, surround it,
In the lonely dell.

Down the hill-side frets the water,
Gurgling to the shadowed pool,
With a trickling, ringing laughter
As it fills the basin full,
The grey-green stones among.
And a music like bells pealing,
Wavelets gushing, eddies reeling
With a wild, wild song!

All about its brink the aspen
Quivers into sun and shade;
Asphodel and bindweed, claspen
Tendril-wise, thick bowers have made
The noisy rill about.
And always 'mongst the broad ferns waving,
When the summer storms are raving,
Zephyrs play in and out.

Softly, in the evening twilight,
When the air is hushed and still,
Closed the little peering eye-bright,
And the shadows on the hill
Are fast asleep;
Down the dark and windy hollow,
Where the traitor echoes follow,
Cometh one to weep:

She is young, and fresh, and blooming,
Has a brow most pure and fair;
Through the purple summer gloaming
Come her step and form of air,
Secretly and slow;
Lest some lurking spy should follow,
Down the dark and windy hollow,
Where she fain would go.

Trailing with a laggard foot-fall,
Drawn by hope, withheld by fear,
Through the plummy ferns at night-fall,
When the sky shows dim and drear
Beyond the trees;
With a cheek, now flushing, paling,
To her heart's wild inner wailing,
Starting at each breeze.

Slowly, down the steep green hill-side,
Over slippery, lichened stones,
Slowly, by the Holy Well-side,
Listening to its murmured tones,
Down on her knee;
With the black boughs o'er her swaying,
Softly weeping, softly saying
"Loveth he me?"

By the Holy Well down kneeling,
Watching for her gain or loss,
O'er its mirror-darkness stealing,
Light, with shade of pines across,
Like pale moonbeams;
Slow and solemn as the warning
Eastern light of winter morning,
On our waking dreams.

Brightening still until the lustre
Gloweth like topaz in the shade:
And the tiny eddies muster
Like a framework round it laid,
Fretted o'er with gold;
And the inner circle glistens,
While the night stands still and listens,
To that question old.

On the brink low bends the maiden,
Peering down into the glass,
All her soul with terror laden,
Asking of the shades that pass,
"Loveth he me?"
With a tone of sad complaining,
While the light is slowly waning,
"Loveth he me?"

Thrice her white lips opening quiver,
 E'er she dares to speak again;
 Creeping down the little river
 Steals the darkness back again;
 "Loveth he me?"
 Comes a sound of fairy laughter,
 Trilling sweep the echoes after,
 "He loveth thee!"

Up she rises, gaily, gladly,
 On her lip the rose-flush warms;
 All the tiny zephyrs madly
 Wake and toy with her alarms,
 As she trips away;
 Startled by a dead leaf falling,
 Or a wakeful echo calling
 To the coming day.

Hastes she from the haunted hollow,
 Light of heart, and swift of foot;
 Ever as she goes, there follow
 Voices murmuring like the lute,
 "He loveth thee!"
 All her spirits inly ringing
 To their wild and tuneful singing,
 "He loveth me!"

Many a mile of lonely woodland
 Lies between her and her home;
 Hill, and dale, and heathery moorland,
 Where the hunters rarely come
 Seeking their game.
 But, it chanced that morning early
 While the dew lay light and pearly,
 Herbert Wilford came.

With a downcast brow and darkling,
 Full of pride and full of ire,
 And an eye both hot and sparkling,
 Kindled at his wild heart's fire—
 And his teeth set.
 In an opening of the glade,
 Suddenly within the shade,
 There they two met.

O'er her face there came a flushing:
 Could it be the morning light?
 Or a tide of blushes rushing
 From her pure love into sight,
 To betray her?
 Herbert in her fair face peering,
 With hot gaze her forehead searing,
 Looked as he could slay her.

"Hast thou been to Haunted Hollow,
 Wilful, false, proud, fickle May?
 Art thou pleased to see me follow
 On thy steps till break of day,
 Vain little heart?
 'Tis said that on the Eve St. John,
 Maids to Holy Well have gone
 To ask their fate.

"'Tis a year, May, since we parted—
 I in anger, thou in tears.
 I have seen thee merry-hearted,
 Joyous with thy young compeers,
 Forgetting me.
 If the echo told thee truly,
 As I read thy blush unruly,
 It said, 'Still loveth he.'"

From his dark brow passed the glooming;
 From her heart fled all her fears,
 While the purple fells were blooming,
 Under morning's lustrous tears,
 Upon the lea.
 And tinkled, as they went, the hare-bells,
 All the little fairy joy-bells,
 "Loveth he me?"
 "He loveth thee!"
 "Loveth she me?"
 "She loveth thee!"

A ROGUE'S LIFE.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS. CHAPTER THE THIRD.

I HAD spoken confidently enough, while arguing the question of Doctor Knapton's respectability with the Treasurer of the Duskydale Institution; but, if my perceptions had not been blinded by my enthusiastic admiration for the beautiful Laura, I think I should have secretly distrusted my own opinion as soon as I was left by myself. Had I been in full possession of my senses, I might have questioned, on reflection, whether the doctor's method of accounting for the suspicions which kept his neighbours aloof from him, was quite satisfactory. Love is generally described, I believe, as the tender passion. When I remember the insidiously relaxing effect of it on all my faculties, I feel inclined to alter the popular definition, and to call it a moral vapour-bath.

What the managing-committee of the Duskydale Institution thought of the change in me, I cannot imagine. Doctor and Miss Knapton left the town on the day they had originally appointed, before I could make any excuse for calling again; and, as a necessary consequence of their departure, I lost all interest in the affairs of the ball, and yawned in the faces of the committee when I was obliged to be present at their deliberations in my official capacity. It was all Laura with me, whatever they did. I read the Minutes through a soft cloud of yellow muslin. Notes of melodious laughter bubbled, in my mind's-ear, through all the drawing and stammering of our speech-making members. When our dignified President thought he had caught my eye, and made oratorical overtures to me from the top of the table, I was lost in the contemplation of silk purses and white fingers weaving them. I meant "Laura" when I said "hear, hear"—and when I officially produced my subscription-list, it was all a-glow with the roseate hues of the marriage-licence. If any unsympathetic male readers should think this statement exaggerated, I appeal to the ladies—they will appreciate the rigid, yet tender, truth of it.

The night of the ball came. I have nothing but the vaguest recollection of it. I remember that the more the perverse lecture-theatre was warmed the more per-

sistently it smelt of damp plaster; and that the more brightly it was lighted, the more overgrown and lonesome it looked. I can recal to mind that the company assembled numbered about fifty; the room being big enough to hold three hundred. I have a vision still before me, of twenty out of these fifty guests, solemnly executing intricate figure-dances, under the superintendence of an infirm local dancing-master—a mere speck of fidgetty human wretchedness twisting about in the middle of an empty floor. I see, faintly, down the dim vista of the Past, an agreeable figure, like myself, with a cocked-hat under its arm, black tights on its lightly-tripping legs, a rosette in its button-hole, and an engaging smile on its face, walking from end to end of the room, in the character of Master of the Ceremonies. These visions and events I can recal vaguely; and with them my remembrances of the ball come to a close. It was a complete failure, and that would, of itself, have been enough to sicken me of remaining at the Duskydale Institution, even if I had not had any reasons of the tender sort for wishing to extend my travels in rural England to the neighbourhood of Barkingham. The difficulty was how to find a decent pretext for getting away. Fortunately, the managing committee relieved me of any perplexity on this head, by passing a resolution, one day, which called upon the president to remonstrate with me on my want of proper interest in the affairs of the Institution. I replied to the remonstrance that the affairs of the Institution were so hopelessly dull that it was equally absurd and unjust to expect any human being to take the smallest interest in them. At this there arose an indignant cry of "Resign!" from the whole committee; to which I answered politely, that I should be delighted to oblige the gentlemen, and to go forthwith, on the condition of receiving a quarter's salary in the way of previous compensation. After a sordid opposition from an economical minority, my condition of departure was accepted. I wrote a letter of resignation, received in exchange twelve pounds ten shillings, and took my place, that same day, on the box-seat of the Barkingham mail. Rather changeable this life of mine, was it not? Before I was twenty-five years of age, I had tried doctoring, caricaturing, portrait-painting, old picture-making, and Institution-managing; and, now, with the help of Laura Knapton, I was about to try how a little marrying would suit me. Surely, Shakespeare must have had me prophetically in his eye, when he wrote that about "one man in his time playing many parts." What a character I should have made for him, if he had only been alive now!

I found out from the coachman, among other matters, that there was a famous fishing stream near Barkingham; and the first thing I did, on arriving at the town, was to

buy a rod and line. It struck me that my safest way of introducing myself would be to tell Doctor Knapton that I had come to the neighbourhood for a little fishing, and so to prevent him from fancying that I was suspiciously prompt in availing myself of his offered hospitality. I put up, of course, at the inn—stuck a large parchment book of flies half in and half out of the pocket of my shooting-jacket—and set off at once to the doctor's. The waiter of whom I asked my way stared, distrustfully while he directed me. The people at the inn had evidently heard of my new friend, and were not favourably disposed towards the cause of scientific investigation.

The house stood about a mile out of the town, in a dip of ground near the famous fishing-stream. A large, lonely, old-fashioned red-brick building, surrounded by high walls, with a garden and plantation behind it. As I rang at the gate-bell, I looked up at the house. Sure enough, all the top windows in front were closed with shutters and barred. I was let in by a man in livery; who, however, in manners and appearance, looked much more like a workman in disguise than a footman. He had a very suspicious eye, and he fixed it on me unpleasantly when I handed him my card.

I was shown into a morning-room exactly like other morning-rooms in country-houses. After a long delay the doctor came in, with scientific butchers' sleeves on his arms, and an apron tied round his portly waist. Heapologised for coming down in his working-dress, and said everything that was civil and proper about the pleasure of unexpectedly seeing me again so soon. There was something rather preoccupied, I thought, in those brightly resolute eyes of his; but I naturally attributed that to the engrossing influence of his scientific inquiries. He was evidently not at all taken in by my story about coming to Barkingham to fish; but he saw, as well as I did, that it would do to keep up appearances, and contrived to look highly interested immediately in my parchment book. I asked after his daughter. He said she was in the garden, and proposed that we should go and find her. We did find her, with a pair of scissors in her hand, outblossoming the flowers that she was trimming. She looked really glad to see me—her brown eyes beamed clear and kindly—she gave my hand another inestimable shake—the summer breezes waved her black curls gently upward from her waist—she had on a straw hat and a brown holland gardening dress. I eyed it with all the practical interest of a linen-draper. O Brown Holland, you are but a coarse and cheap fabric, yet how soft and priceless you look when clothing the figure of Laura Knapton!

I lunched with them. The doctor recurred to the subject of my angling intentions, and asked his daughter if she had heard what

parts of the stream at Barkingham were best for fishing in. She replied, with a mixture of modest evasiveness and adorable simplicity, that she had sometimes seen gentlemen angling from a meadow-bank about a quarter of a mile below her flower-garden. I risked everything in my usual venturesome way, and asked if she would show me where the place was, in case I called the next morning with my fishing-rod. She looked dutifully at her father. He smiled and nodded. Inestimable parent!

On rising to take leave, I was rather curious to know whether he would offer me a bed in the house, or not. He detected the direction of my thoughts in my face and manner, and apologised for not having a bed to offer me; every spare room in the house being occupied by his chemical assistants, and by the lumber of his laboratories. Even while he was speaking those few words, Laura's face changed just as I had seen it change at our first interview. The downcast, gloomy expression overspread it again. Her father's eye wandered towards her when mine did, and suddenly assumed the same distrustful look which I remembered detecting in it, under similar circumstances, at Duskydale. What could this mean?

The doctor shook hands with me in the hall, leaving the workmanlike footman to open the door. I stopped to admire a fine pair of stag's antlers placed over it. The footman coughed impatiently. I still lingered, hearing the doctor's footsteps ascending the stairs. They suddenly stopped; and then there was a low heavy clang, like the sound of a closing door made of iron, or of some other unusually strong material; then total silence, interrupted by another impatient cough from the workmanlike footman. After that, I thought my wisest proceeding would be to go away before my mysterious attendant was driven to practical extremities.

Between thoughts of Laura and inquisitive yearnings to know more about the doctor's experiments, I passed rather a restless night at my inn. The next morning, I found the lovely mistress of my future destiny, with the softest of shawls on her shoulders, the brightest of parasols in her hand, and the smart little straw hat of the day before on her head, ready to show me the way to the fishing-place. If I could be sure beforehand that these pages would only be read by persons actually occupied in the making of love—that oldest and longest-established of all branches of manufacturing industry—I could go into some very tender and interesting particulars on the subject of my first day's fishing, under the adorable auspices of Miss Knapton. But as I cannot hope for a wholly sympathetic audience—as there may be monks, misogynists, political economists, and other professedly hard-hearted persons present among those whom I now address—I think it best to keep to safe generalities,

and to describe my love-making in as few sentences as the vast, though soft, importance of the subject will allow me to use. Let me confess, then, that I assumed the character of a fastidious angler, and managed to be a week in discovering the right place to fish in—always, it is unnecessary to say, under Laura's guidance. We went up the stream and down the stream on one side. We crossed the bridge, and went up the stream and down the stream on the other. We got into a punt, and went up the stream (with great difficulty) and down the stream (with great ease). We landed on a little island, and walked all round it, and inspected the stream attentively from a central point of view. We found the island damp, and went back to the bank, and up the stream, and over the bridge, and down the stream again; and then, for the first time, the sweet girl turned appealingly to me, and confessed that she had exhausted her artless knowledge of the locality. It was exactly a week from the day when I had first followed her into the fields with my fishing-rod over my shoulder; and I had never yet caught anything but Laura's hand, and that not with my hook. We sat down close together on the bank, entirely in consequence of our despair at not finding a good fishing-place. I looked at the brown eyes, and they turned away observantly down the stream. I followed them, and they turned away inquiringly up the stream. Was this angel of patience and kindness still looking for a fishing-place? And was it *up* the stream, after all? No!—she smiled and shook her head when I asked the question, and the brown eyes suddenly stole a look at me. I could hold out no longer. In one breathless moment I caught hold of both her hands—in one stammering sentence I asked her if she would be my wife.

She tried faintly to free her hands—gave up the attempt—smiled—made an effort to look grave—gave that up, too—sighed suddenly—checked herself suddenly—said nothing. Perhaps I ought to have taken my answer for granted; but the least business-like man that ever lived always becomes an eminently practical character in matters of love. I repeated my question. She looked away confusedly; her eye lighted on a corner of her father's red-brick house, peeping through a gap in the plantation already mentioned; and her blushing cheeks lost their colour instantly. I felt her hands grow cold; she drew them resolutely out of mine, and rose with the tears in her eyes. Had I offended her?

"No," she said, when I asked the question, and turned to me again, and held out her hand with such frank, fearless kindness, that I almost fell on my knees to thank her for it.

Might I hope ever to hear her say Yes to the question that I had asked on the river-bank?

She sighed bitterly, and turned again towards the red-brick house.

Was there any family reason against her saying Yes? Anything that I must not inquire into? Any opposition to be dreaded from her father?

The moment I mentioned her father, she shrank away from me, and burst into a violent fit of crying.

"Don't speak of it again!" she said in a broken voice. "I mustn't—you musn't—O, don't, don't say a word more about it! I'm not distressed with you—it is not your fault. Don't say anything—leave me quiet for a minute. I shall soon be better if you leave me quiet."

She dried her eyes directly, with a shiver as if it was cold, and took my arm. I led her back to the house-gate; and then, feeling that I could not go in to lunch as usual, after what had happened, said I would return to the fishing-place.

"Shall I come to dinner this evening?" I asked, as I rang the gate-bell for her.

"Oh, yes—yes!—do come, or he——"

The mysterious man-servant opened the door, and we parted before she could say the next words.

I went back to the fishing-place with a heavy heart, overcome by mournful thoughts, for the first time in my life. It was plain that she did not dislike me, and equally plain that there was some obstacle connected with her father, which forbade her to listen to my offer of marriage. From the time when she had accidentally looked towards the red-brick house, something in her manner which it is quite impossible to describe, had suggested to my mind that this obstacle was not only something she could not mention, but something that she was partly ashamed of, partly afraid of, and partly doubtful about. What could it be? How had she first known it? In what way was her father connected with it?

In the course of our walks she had told me nothing about herself which was not perfectly simple and unsuggestive. Her mother had died when she was about fourteen years old. While she was growing up she lived with her father and mother at Paris, where the doctor had many friends—for all of whom she remembered feeling more or less dislike, without being able to tell why. They had then come to England, had lived in lodgings in London, and had removed to their present abode after her mother's death, taking a whole house to themselves, to give the doctor full accommodation for the carrying on of his scientific pursuits. He often had occasion to go to London; but never took her with him. The only woman at home now, besides herself, was an elderly person, who acted as cook and housekeeper, and who had been in their service for many years. It was very lonely sometimes not having a companion of her own age and sex; but she had got tolerably used to bear it, and to amuse herself with her books, and music, and flowers. Thus far she

chatted about herself quite freely; but when I tried, even in the vaguest manner, to lead her into discussing the causes of her strangely-secluded life, she looked so distressed, and became so suddenly silent, that I naturally refrained from saying another word on that topic. One conclusion, however, I felt tolerably sure that I had drawn correctly from what she said: her father's conduct towards her, though not absolutely blameable or grossly neglectful on any point, had still never been of a nature to make her ardently fond of him. He performed the ordinary parental duties rigidly and respectably enough; but he had apparently not cared to win all the filial love which his daughter would have bestowed on a more affectionate man.

When, after reflecting on what Laura had told me, I began to call to mind what I had been able to observe for myself, I found ample materials to excite my curiosity in relation to the doctor, if not my distrust. I have already described how I heard the clang of the heavy door, on the occasion of my first visit to the red-brick house. The next day, when the doctor again took leave of me in the hall, I hit on a plan for seeing the door as well as hearing it. I dawdled on my way out, till I heard the clang again; then pretended to remember some important message which I had forgotten to give to the doctor, and with a look of innocent hurry ran upstairs to overtake him. The disguised workman ran after me with a shout of "stop." I was conveniently deaf to him—reached the first floor landing—and arrived at a door which shut off the whole staircase higher up; an iron door, as solid as if it belonged to a banker's strong room, and guarded millions of money. I returned to the hall, inattentive to the servant's not over-civil remonstrances, and, saying that I would wait till I saw the doctor again, left the house. The next day two pale-looking men, in artisan costume, came up to the gate at the same time as I did; each carrying a long wooden box under his arm, strongly bound with iron. I tried to make them talk, while we were waiting for admission, but neither of them would go beyond Yes, or No; and both had, to my eye, some unmistakeably sinister lines in their faces. The next day the housekeeping cook came to the door—a buxom old woman with a bold look, and a ready smile, and something in her manner which suggested that she had not begun life quite so respectably as she was now ending it. She seemed to be decidedly satisfied with my personal appearance; talked to me on indifferent matters with great glibness and satisfaction, but suddenly became silent and diplomatic the moment I looked toward the stairs and asked innocently if she had to go up and down them often in the course of the day. As for the doctor himself, he was unapproachable on the subject of the mysterious upper regions. If I introduced chemistry in general into the con-

versation, he begged me not to spoil his happy holiday hours with his daughter and me, by leading him back to his work-a-day thoughts. If I referred to his own experiments in particular, he always made a joke about being afraid of my chemical knowledge, and of my wishing to anticipate him in his discoveries. In brief, after a week's run of the lower regions, the upper part of the red-brick house, and the actual nature of its owner's occupations still remained impenetrable mysteries to me, pry, ponder, and question as I might.

Thinking of this on the river-bank, in connection with the distressing scene which I had just had with Laura, I found that the mysterious obstacle at which she had hinted, the mysterious life led by her father, and the mysterious top of the house that had hitherto defied my curiosity, all three connected themselves in my mind as links of the same chain. The obstacle, being what hindered my prospects of marrying Laura, was the thing that most troubled me. If I only found out what it was, and if I made light of it (which I was resolved beforehand to do, let it be what it might) I should most probably end by overcoming her scruples, and taking her away from the ominous red-brick house in the character of my wife. But how was I to make the all-important discovery? Cudgelling my brains for an answer to this question I fell at last into reasoning upon it, by a process of natural logic, something after this fashion:—The mysterious top of the house is connected with the doctor, and the doctor is connected with the obstacle which has made wretchedness between Laura and me. If I can only get to the top of the house, I may get also to the root of the obstacle. It is a dangerous and an uncertain experiment; but, come what may of it, I will try and find out, if human ingenuity can compass the means, what Dr. Knapton really occupies himself with on the other side of that iron door.

Having come to this resolution (and deriving, let me add, parenthetically, great consolation from it), the next subject of consideration was the best method of getting safely into the top regions of the house. Picking the lock of the iron door was out of the question, from the exposed nature of the situation which that mysterious iron barrier occupied. My only possible way to the second floor, lay by the back of the house. I had looked up at it two or three times, whilst walking in the garden after dinner with Laura. What had I brought away in my memory as the result of that casual inspection of my host's back premises? Several fragments of useful information. In the first place, one of the most magnificent vines I had ever seen, grew against the back wall of the house, trained carefully on a strong trellis-work. In the second place, the middle first-floor back window looked out on a little stone balcony, built on the top of the

porch over the garden door. In the third place, the back windows of the second-floor had been open, on each occasion when I had seen them, most probably to air the house, which could not be ventilated from the front during the hot summer weather, in consequence of the shut-up condition of all the windows thereabouts. In the fourth place, hard by the coach-house in which Dr. Knapton's neat gig was put up, there was a tool-shed, in which the gardener kept his short pruning-ladder. In the fifth and last place, outside the stable in which Doctor Knapton's blood-mare lived in luxurious solitude, was a dog-kennel with a large mastiff chained to it night and day. If I could only rid myself of the dog,—a gaunt, half-starved brute, made savage and mangy by perpetual confinement—I did not see any reason to despair of getting in undiscovered, at one of the second-floor windows, provided I waited until a sufficiently late hour, and succeeded in scaling the garden wall at the back of the house.

Life without Laura being not worth having, I determined to risk the thing that very night. Going back at once to the town of Barkingham, I provided myself with a short bit of rope, a little bull's-eye lantern, a small screw-driver, and a nice bit of beef chemically adapted for the soothing of troublesome dogs. I then dressed, disposed of these things neatly in my coat-pockets, and went to the doctor's to dinner. In one respect, Fortune favoured my audacity. It was the sultriest day of the whole season—surely they could not think of shutting up the second-floor back windows to-night!

Laura was pale and silent. The lovely brown eyes, when they looked at me, said as plainly as in words, "We have been crying a great deal, Frank, since we saw you last." The little white fingers gave mine a significant squeeze—and that was all the reference that passed between us to what had happened in the morning. She sat through the dinner bravely; but, when the dessert came, left us for the night, with a few shy hurried words about the excessive heat of the weather being too much for her. I rose to open the door, and exchanged a last meaning look with her, as she bowed and went by me. Little did I then think that I should have to live upon nothing but the remembrance of that look for many weary days that were yet to come.

The doctor was in excellent spirits, and almost oppressively hospitable. We sat sociably chatting over our claret till past eight o'clock. Then my host turned to his desk to write a letter before the post went out; and I strolled away to smoke a cigar in the garden.

Second floor back windows all open, atmosphere as sultry as ever, gardener's pruning-ladder quite safe in the tool-shed, savage mastiff outside kennel crunching last bones of supper. Good. The dog will not be visited again to-night; I may throw my medicated bit of beef at once into his kennel.

I acted on the idea immediately ; the dog rushed in after the beef ; I heard a snap, a wheeze, a choke, and a groan,—and there was the mastiff disposed of, inside the kennel, where nobody could find out that he was dead till the time came for feeding him the next morning.

I went back to the doctor ; we had a social glass of cold brandy-and-water together, I lighted another cigar, and took my leave. My host being too respectable a man not to keep early country hours, I went away, as usual, about ten. The mysterious man-servant locked the gate behind me. I sauntered on the road back to Barkingham for about five minutes, then struck off sharp for the plantation, lighted my lanthorn with the help of my cigar and a brimstone match of that barbarous period, shut down the slide again, and made for the garden wall.

It was formidably high, and garnished horribly with broken bottles ; but it was also old, and when I came to pick at the mortar with my screw-driver, I found it reasonably rotten with age and damp. I removed four bricks to make foot-holes in different positions up the wall. It was desperately hard and long work, easy as it may sound in description—especially when I had to hold on by the top of the wall, with my flat opera hat (as we used to call it in those days) laid, as a guard, between my hand and the glass, while I cleared a way through the sharp bottle-ends for my other hand and my knees. This done, my great difficulty was vanquished ; and I had only to drop luxuriously into a flower-bed on the other side of the wall.

Perfect stillness in the garden : no sign of a light anywhere at the back of the house : first-floor windows all shut : second-floor windows still open. I fetched the pruning-ladder ; put it against the side of the porch ; tied one end of my bit of rope to the top round of it ; took the other end in my mouth, and prepared to climb to the balcony over the porch by the thick vine branches and the trellis-work. No man who has had any real experience of life, can have failed to observe how amazingly close, in critical situations, the grotesque and the terrible, the comic and the serious, contrive to tread on each other's heels. At such times, the last thing we ought properly to think of comes into our heads, or the least consistent event that could possibly be expected to happen, does actually occur. When I put my life in danger on that memorable night, by putting my foot on the trellis-work, I absolutely thought of the never-dying Lady Malkinshaw plunged in refreshing slumber, and of the frantic exclamations Mr. Batterbury would utter if he saw what her ladyship's grandson was doing with his precious life and limbs at that critical moment. I am no hero—I was fully aware of the danger to which I was exposing myself ; and yet I protest that I caught myself laughing under my breath, with the

most outrageous inconsistency, at the instant when I began the ascent of the trellis-work.

I reached the balcony over the porch in safety, depending more upon the tough vine branches than the trellis-work, during my ascent. My next employment was to pull up the pruning-ladder, as softly as possible, by the rope which I held attached to it. This done, I put the ladder against the house wall, listened, measured the distance to the open second-floor window with my eye, listened again—and, finding all quiet, began my second and last ascent. The ladder was comfortably long, and I was comfortably tall ; my hand was on the window-sill—I mounted another two rounds—and my eyes were level with the interior of the room.

Suppose any one should be sleeping there ! I listened at the window attentively before I ventured on taking my lantern out of my coat pocket. The night was so quiet and airless, that there was not the faintest rustle among the leaves in the garden beneath me to distract my attention. I listened. The breathing of the lightest of sleepers must have reached my ear, through that intense stillness, if the room had been a bedroom, and the bed were occupied. I heard nothing but the beat of my own heart. The minutes of suspense were passing heavily—I laid my other hand over the window-sill, then a moment of doubt came—doubt whether I should carry the adventure any farther. I mastered my hesitation directly—it was too late then for second thoughts. “Now for it !” I whispered to myself, and got in at the window.

To wait listening again, in the darkness of that unknown region was more than I had courage for. The moment I was down on the floor, I pulled the lanthorn out of my pocket, and raised the shade. So far, so good—I found myself in a dirty lumber room. Large pans, some of them cracked, and more of them broken ; empty boxes bound with iron, of the same sort as those I had seen the workmen bringing in at the front gate ; old coal sacks ; a packing-case full of coke ; and a huge, cracked, mouldy, blacksmith's bellows—these were the principal objects that I observed in the lumber-room. The one door leading out of it was open, as I had expected it would be, in order to let the air through the back window into the house. I took off my shoes, and stole into the passage. My first impulse, the moment I looked along it, was to shut down my lanthorn shade, and listen again.

Still I heard nothing ; but at the far end of the passage, I saw a bright light pouring through the half-opened door of one of the mysterious front rooms. I crept softly towards it. A decidedly chemical smell began to steal into my nostrils—and, listening again, I thought I heard, above me and in some distant room, a noise like the low growl of a large furnace, muffled in some peculiar manner.

Should I retrace my steps in that direction? No—not till I had seen something of the room with the bright light, outside of which I was now standing. I bent forward softly; looking by little and little further and further through the opening of the door, until my head and shoulders were fairly inside the room, and my eyes had convinced me that no living soul, sleeping or waking, was in any part of it at that particular moment. Impelled by a fatal curiosity, I entered immediately, and began to look about me with eager eyes.

Iron ladles, large pans full of white sand, files with white metal left glittering in their teeth, moulds of plaster of Paris, bags containing the same material in powder, a powerful machine with the name and use of which I was theoretically not unacquainted, white metal in a partially-fused state, bottles of aquafortis, dies scattered over a dresser, crucibles, sandpaper, bars of metal, and edged tools in plenty, of the strangest construction. I was not at all a particular man, as the reader knows by this time; but when I looked at these objects, and thought of Laura, I could not for the life of me help shuddering. There was not the least doubt about it, even after the little I had seen: the important chemical pursuits to which Doctor Knapton was devoting himself, meant, in plain English and in one word—Coining.

Did Laura know what I knew now, or did she only suspect it? Whichever way I answered that question in my own mind, I could be no longer at any loss for an explanation of her behaviour in the meadow by the stream, or of that unnaturally gloomy, downcast look which overspread her face when her father's pursuits were the subject of conversation. Did I falter in my resolution to marry her, now that I had discovered what the obstacle was which had made mystery and wretchedness between us? Certainly not. I was above all prejudices. I was the least particular of mankind. I had no family affection in my way—and, greatest fact of all, I was in love. Under those circumstances what Rogue of any spirit would have faltered? After the first shock of the discovery was over, my resolution to be Laura's husband was settled more firmly than ever.

There was a little round table in a corner of the room farthest from the door, which I had not yet examined. A feverish longing to look at everything within my reach—to penetrate to the innermost recesses of the labyrinth in which I had involved myself—consumed me. I went to the table, and saw upon it, ranged symmetrically side by side, four objects which looked like thick rulers wrapped up in silver paper. I opened the paper at the end of one of the rulers, and found that it was composed of half-crowns.

I had closed the paper again; and, was just raising my head from the table over which

it had been bent, when my right cheek came in contact with something hard and cold. I started back—looked up—and confronted Doctor Knapton, holding a pistol at my right temple.

He, too, had his shoes off; he, too, had come in without making the least noise. He cocked the pistol without saying a word. I felt that I was probably standing face to face with death, and I too said not a word. We two Rogues looked each other steadily and silently in the face—he, the mighty and prosperous villain, with my life in his hands: I, the abject and poor scamp, waiting his mercy.

It must have been some minutes after I heard the click of the cocked pistol before he spoke.

"How did you get here?" he asked.

The quiet commonplace terms in which he put his question, and the perfect composure and politeness of his manner, reminded me a little of Gentleman Jones. But the doctor was much the more respectable-looking man of the two; his baldness was more intellectual and benevolent; there was a delicacy and propriety in the pulps of his fat white chin, a bland bagginess in his unwhiskered cheeks, a reverent roughness about his eyebrows and fullness in his lower eyelids, which raised him far higher, physiognomically speaking, in the social scale, than my old prison acquaintance. Put a shovel-hat on Gentleman Jones, and the effect would only have been eccentric; put the same covering on the head of Doctor Knapton, and the effect would have been strictly episcopal.

"How did you get here?" he repeated, still without showing the least irritation.

I told him how I had got in at the second-floor window, without concealing a word of the truth. The gravity of the situation, and the sharpness of the doctor's intellects, as expressed in his eyes, made anything like a suppression of facts on my part a desperately dangerous experiment.

"You wanted to see what I was about up here, did you?" said he, when I had ended my confession. "Do you know?"

The pistol barrel touched my cheek as he said the last words. I thought of all the suspicious objects scattered about the room, of the probability that he was only putting the question to try my courage, of the very likely chance that he would shoot me forthwith, if I began to prevaricate. I thought of these things, and boldly answered:

"Yes, I do know."

He looked at me reflectively; then said, in low, thoughtful tones, speaking, not to me, but entirely to himself:

"Suppose I shoot him?"

I saw in his eye, that if I flinched, he would draw the trigger.

"Suppose you trust me?" said I, without moving a muscle.

"I trusted you, as an honest man, down stairs, and I find you like a thief, up here," returned the doctor, with a self-satisfied smile at the neatness of his own retort. "No," he continued, relapsing into soliloquy: "There is risk every way; but the least risk perhaps is to shoot him."

"Wrong," said I. "There are relations of mine who have a pecuniary interest in my life. I am the main condition of a contingent reversion in their favour. If I am missed, I shall be enquired after." I have wondered since at my own coolness in the face of the doctor's pistol; but my life depended on my keeping my self-possession, and the desperate nature of the situation lent me a desperate courage.

"How do I know you are speaking the truth?" said he.

"Have I not spoken the truth, hitherto?"

Those words made him hesitate. He lowered the pistol slowly to his side. I began to breathe freely.

"Trust me," I repeated. "If you don't believe I should hold my tongue about what I have seen here, for your sake, you may be certain that I would for—"

"For my daughter's," he interposed, with a sarcastic smile.

I bowed with all imaginable cordiality. The doctor waved his pistol in the air contemptuously.

"There are two ways of making you hold your tongue," he said. "The first is making a dead body of you; the second is making a felon of you. On consideration, after what you have said, the risk in either case seems about equal. I am naturally a humane man; your family have done me no injury; I will not be the cause of their losing money; I won't take your life, I'll have your character. We are all felons on this floor of the house. You have come among us—you shall be one of us. Ring that bell."

He pointed with the pistol to a bell-handle behind me. I pulled it in silence. Felon! The word has an ugly sound—a very ugly sound. But, considering how near the black curtain had been to falling over the adventurous drama of my life, had I any right to complain of the prolongation of the scene, however darkly it might look at first? Besides, some of the best feelings of our common nature (putting out of all question the value which men so unaccountably persist in setting on their own lives), impelled me, of necessity, to choose the alternative of felonious existence in preference to that of respectable death. Love and Honour bade me live to marry Laura; and a sense of family duty made me shrink from occasioning a loss of three thousand pounds to my affectionate sister. Perish the far-fetched scruples which would break the heart of one lovely woman, and scatter to the winds the pin-money of another!

"If you utter one word in contradiction of

anything I say when my workmen come into the room," said the doctor, uncocking his pistol as soon as I had rung the bell, "I shall change my mind about leaving your life and taking your character. Remember that; and keep a guard on your tongue."

The door opened, and four men entered. One was an old man whom I had not seen before; in the other three I recognised the workmanlike footman, and the two sinister artisans whom I had met at the house-gate. They all started, guiltily enough, at seeing me.

"Let me introduce you," said the doctor, taking me by the arm. "Old File and Young File—Mill, and Screw—Mr. Frank Softly. We have nicknames in this workshop, Mr. Softly, derived humourously from our professional tools and machinery. When you have been here long enough, you will get a nickname, too. Gentlemen," he continued, turning to the workmen, "this is a new recruit, with a knowledge of chemistry which will be useful to us. He is perfectly well aware that the nature of our vocation makes us suspicious of all new-comers, and he, therefore, desires to give you practical proof that he is to be depended on, by making half-a-crown immediately, and sending the same up, along with our handiwork, directed in his own handwriting to our estimable correspondents in London. When you have all seen him do this of his own free will, and thereby put his own life as completely within the power of the law, as we have put ours, you will know that he is really one of us, and will be under no apprehensions for the future. Take great pains with him, and as soon as he turns out a tolerably neat article, from the simple flatted plates, under your inspection, let me know. I shall take a few hours' repose on my camp-bed in the study, and shall be found there whenever you want me."

He nodded to us all round in the most friendly manner, and left the room. I looked with considerable secret distrust at the four gentlemen who were to instruct me in the art of making false coin. Young File was the workmanlike footman; Old File was his father; Mill and Screw were the two sinister artisans. The man of the company whose looks I liked least, was Screw. He had wicked little twinkling eyes—and they followed me about treacherously whenever I moved. "You and I, Screw, are likely to quarrel," I thought to myself, as I tried vainly to stare him out of countenance.

I entered on my new and felonious functions forthwith. Resistance was useless, and calling for help would have been sheer insanity. It was midnight; and, even supposing the windows had not been barred, the house was a mile from any human habitation. Accordingly, I abandoned myself to fate with my usual magnanimity. Only let me end in winning Laura, and I am resigned to the loss of whatever small shreds and patches of character still hang about me.

—such was my philosophy. I wish I could have taken higher moral ground with equally consoling results to my own feelings.

The same regard for the well-being of society which led me to abstain from entering into particulars on the subject of Old Master-making, when I was apprenticed to Mr. Ishmael Pickup, now commands me to be equally discreet on the kindred subject of Half-Crown-making, under the auspices of Old File, Young File, Mill, and Screw. Let me merely record that I was a kind of machine in the hands of these four skilled workmen. I moved from room to room, and from process to process, the creature of their directing eyes and guiding hands. I cut myself, I burnt myself, I got speechless from fatigue, and giddy from want of sleep. In short, the sun of the new day was high in the heavens before it was necessary to disturb Doctor Knapton. It had absolutely taken me almost as long to manufacture a half-a-crown feloniously as it takes a respectable man to make it honestly. This is saying a great deal; but it is literally true for all that.

Looking quite fresh and rosy after his night's sleep, the doctor inspected my coin with the air of a schoolmaster examining a little boy's exercise; then handed it to Old File to put the finishing touches and correct the mistakes. It was afterwards returned to me. My own hand placed it in one of the rouleaux of false half-crowns; and my own hand also directed the spurious coin, when it had been safely packed up, to a certain London dealer who was to be on the look-out for it by the next night's mail. That done, my initiation was so far complete.

"I have sent for your luggage, and paid your bill at the inn," said the doctor; "of course in your name. You are now to enjoy the hospitality that I could not extend to you before. A room up-stairs has been prepared for you. You are not exactly in a state of confinement; but, until your studies are completed, I think you had better not interrupt them by going out."

"A prisoner!" I exclaimed aghast.

"Prisoner is a hard word," answered the doctor. "Let us say, a guest under surveillance."

"Do you seriously mean that you intend to keep me shut up in this part of the house, at your will and pleasure?" I enquired, my heart sinking lower and lower at every word I spoke.

"It is very spacious and airy," said the doctor; "as for the lower part of the house, you would find no company there, so you can't want to go to it."

"No company!" I repeated faintly.

"No. My daughter went away this morning for change of air and scene, accompanied by my housekeeper. You look astonished, my dear sir—let me frankly explain myself. While you were the respectable son of Doctor Softly, and grandson of

Lady Malkinshaw, I was ready enough to let my daughter associate with you, and should not have objected if you had married her off my hands into a highly-connected family. Now, however, when you are nothing but one of the workmen in my manufactory of money, your social position is seriously altered for the worse; and, as I could not possibly think of you for a son-in-law, I have considered it best to prevent all chance of your communicating with Laura again, by sending her away from this house while you are in it. You will be in it until I have completed certain business arrangements now in a forward state of progress—after that, you may go away if you please. Pray remember that you have to thank yourself for the position you now stand in; and do me the justice to admit that my conduct towards you is remarkably straightforward, and perfectly natural under all the circumstances."

These words fairly overwhelmed me. I did not even make an attempt to answer them. The hard trials to my courage, endurance, and physical strength, through which I had passed within the last twelve hours, had completely exhausted all my powers of resistance. I went away speechless to my own room; and when I found myself alone there, burst out crying. Childish, was it not?

When I had been rested and strengthened by a few hours' sleep, I found myself able to confront the future with tolerable calmness. What would it be best for me to do? Ought I to attempt to make my escape? I did not despair of succeeding; but when I began to think of the consequences of success, I hesitated. My chief object now, was, not so much to secure my own freedom, as to find out where Laura was. I had never been so deeply and desperately in love with her as I was now, when I knew she was separated from me. Suppose I succeeded in escaping from the clutches of Doctor Knapton—might I not be casting myself uselessly on the world, without a chance of finding a single clue to trace her by? Suppose, on the other hand, that I remained for the present in the red-brick house—should I not by that course of conduct be putting myself in the best position for making discoveries? In the first place, there was the chance that Laura might find some secret means of communicating with me if I remained where I was. In the second place, the doctor would, in all probability, have occasion to write to his daughter, or would be likely to receive letters from her; and, if I quieted all suspicion on my account by docile behaviour, and kept my eyes sharply on the look-out, I might find opportunities of surprising the secrets of his writing-desk. I felt that I need be under no restraints of honour with a man who was keeping me a prisoner, and who had made an accomplice of me by threatening my life. Accordingly, while resolving to show out-

wardly an amiable submission to my fate, I determined at the same time to keep secretly on the watch, and to take the very first chance of outwitting Doctor Knapton that might happen to present itself. When we next met, I was perfectly civil to him; and he congratulated me politely on the improvement for the better in my manners and appearance.

THE ROVING ENGLISHMAN.

MESSINA.

It was a wild gusty night, and we stood on the deck of the Thabor, watching the flame-breathings of Stromboli, as the volcano seemed to sigh and throb like a living thing. At last we dropped off reluctantly one by one, and lay, wave-rocked, in our berths till morning, when the ship cast anchor at Messina.

I shall not soon forget that morning. It was so soft and cloudless, so bright and still. Not a ripple disturbed the waters in their luxurious sleep as we pulled noiselessly on shore, and the spray-drops, falling from our sluggish oars, glistened in the sunshine like molten jewels. It was a welcome change of scene, doubly loveable when we remembered the solitary mount of fire, and the moaning of the solemn encircling sea we had looked upon a few short hours before.

We land, and follow a rickety elderly guide whithersoever he leads us. Barring a little delirium tremens, with a national objection to cold water and towels, he seems a decent sort of body. I perceive for some time, indeed, that he is uncertain how to treat us, not knowing whether we may be disposed to banter or admire: but his ready service and evident anxiety to please might win even a churl; so I am glad to see, at last, that the nervous tremble of his hand abates; his eager watchful eyes become more settled in their expression; he gives way to the natural weariness of age, and takes his ease with us. Firstly, he proceeds dozingly up a number of broad but broken stone steps to the Church of St. Giorgio, which stands upon a hill overlooking the sea. It is a handsome building, with a fine grand old catholic air of vastness and solemnity about it. The walls are enriched with some valuable specimens of marble and mosaic-work. A pretty boy, a chorister, noticing that I stoop to examine them more closely, brings a lighted taper on a stick, and holds it near the stone till I can see every intricate winding in the webbed veins of it. On a small wooden table near the altar, but without the rails, is a dirty black tray; in it stand a plain bronze hand-bell, and two little glass vessels shaped like French coffee-pots, with long swan-necked spouts and rounded handles; both are of the same size, and one contains water, the other wine. Their homeliness accords

ill with the pictured roof, the lofty arches, the sculptured splendour of the church. Some ancient silver candlesticks, quaint and tall, are concealed under blue cotton covers of a gay pattern; so is the altar-piece. The chorister takes them off for a trifling fee, and again holds up his taper, that I may see the crown of St. Giorgio. As our acquaintance ripens, he shows me also the marble effigy of a monk, and a picture of the Virgin with a halo of gilded metal round her head, let into the canvas. There are a few other pictures; poor frameless daubs nailed on to the wall. They are curious as commemorating divers recent and miraculous interpositions of Divine Providence in the private affairs of certain burghers of Messina.

Three young priests enter the church as I turn away. They are swift and stealthy of step; they are not on good terms with themselves, but their shaven faces are endowed with all the romantic fallen beauty of Italy, and in every line you may trace that high and thoughtful intellect which has been often warped and turned so grievously astray. Their voices sound hollow but pleasant as they speak together in undecided conversational tones, which mingle with the silence rather than break it. I cannot readily understand why I feel an irrepressible sentiment of pity as I think about them.

It is early morning, about seven o'clock—so that there are few worshippers; but I notice among them two figures, which tell the eternal tale of woman's tenderness and trusting faith. One is a pale deformed lad, apparently just recovered from an illness; he sits cross-legged, turning about his fingers, in a manner which is, I think, peculiar to the hopeless sick, and watching the notes in a beam of light which falls athwart the temple. But his mother, on bended knees prays fervently beside him. There is no need to ask for whom—God bless all women!

When we come out of the church we lean upon a worn stone balcony, and gaze down over the city.

Ancient of days, fair Zankle likened to a sickle! What a throng of schoolboy memories wake summoned at the name. It was a right populous and wealthy town of the red-handed Mamertini. It was the first place in Sicily which fell before the conquering legions of old Rome. It was seized by the rover Normans. It defied the beleaguering host of Charles of Anjou, who besieged it after the Sicilian Vespers. It was fortified by Charles the Fifth, but unfurled the flag of revolt against mighty Spain of sixteen hundred and seventy-four. It was peculiarly the victim of pestilence; its population was nearly annihilated by the great plague of seventeen hundred and forty-three. And it has lost thirty thousand persons by cholera.

Yonder stands the Norman cathedral,—a gloomy pile, with its heavy gothic architecture, dilapidated by the shock of many an

earthquake. It has a curious pagoda-shaped roof, surmounted with a globe resting on the cross-keys of St. Peter. Here is said to have been preserved a lock of the Virgin's hair, with an autograph letter to the Messinians, assuring them of her especial protection. Studded over the town also is many a tower and belfry, faded by time, and deserted palace, where grandeur is crumbling into ruin. Here and there, too, are traces of the mad work of the misguided enthusiasts of eighteen hundred and forty-eight. As we stood thinking, our rickety guide pointed out the rugged mountains and deep dark valleys, the bold headlands and haunted creeks of desolate Calabria. To the left of us, the classical dangers of Scylla and Charybdis lay bathed in the sunshine of that bright Sicilian morning, and light feluccas with spread sails skimmed swiftly over the perils which dismayed mariners of the ancient world and taught a proverb to its sages.

An ass, pannier-laden, was tethered to the rails of a convent hard by; we were made aware of his presence through a smug sigh, occasioned evidently by the tranquil labours of digestion. He looked very plump and contented, and had a demure sort of wagishness about him, such as may decorously besem the donkey of a pious sisterhood: for there is no more worshipful and reputable beast than an ass. I was glad to have been admitted to the honour of an interview with his excellency, though he eyed me somewhat askant, and I am afraid my pencil and notebook rather shocked his aristocratic ideas of propriety.

We went for breakfast to the Hotel Victoria. The waiter, a plausible little German of gracious and patronising manners, welcomed us with flattering cordiality, and after a short delay, procured us some small fish of exquisite delicacy; some tough chops, watery potatoes stuck together with parsley, wet salt, and coarse black pepper; some boiled chesnuts, very good red-wine called Capri-Basso, brackish water, and gritty coffee; some damp bread, pale doubtful butter, and such other things as go to make up the unsavoury ingredients of a Sicilian meal.

I was glad to escape from it, and go out into the sunlit fantastic streets. It was such an agreeable pastime to stroll negligently along the smooth broad pavement of cool flagstones, watching the life and bustle, the jaunty do-nothing hubbub of an Italian city. It was quite a study to look into the open shops, with their shady recesses, and groups of women gossiping at needlework. Who can wonder at the spell of Italian pictures, when they are copies from such an ardent and expressive nature! I saw three tailoresses sewing away at somebody's old garment, who might each have inspired a Madonna.

The different costumes of the various orders of priests are very striking. The cross-looking mendicant friar, with his wallet and staff;

the sleek abbot with his rosary and white hands, his smooth face and purple beard; his deep-set scrutinising eyes. Then there are the quick ragged children, ready to go to Jericho for a carline. The smart vetturino, with a flower in his hat, and all the professional dash and swagger of a horseman. The women, with their clear olive complexions, and dark passionate glance; the French-dressed soldiers, very odd; the trim fussy merchants, glossy and amazing swells, with startling fashions in whiskers. The carts with foundered oxen—the fat beeves of Sicily rumbling about everywhere; the sailor with his ringlets and ear-rings, and the love-gift near his heart. The merry little horses, so astonishingly overloaded, yet jingling the bells on their gay peaked collars, and capering along as if they made nothing of it. The importunate beggar with his hideous sores and poetical phrases, wistfully eyeing the fagots of wood, cut short in readiness for cold nights. The cook carrying cauliflowers, and stopping to chatter by the way. The mongrel dog of many races visiting his acquaintance like a man of fashion. The elderly ladies of no repute—duennas to idle maidens—lingering about the ruddy-faced passengers from an English steamboat. The luxury of oranges in heaps of thousands. The red anchor and the rusty cable, mending at the smith's; the white sails hanging loosely to dry on the yards of tall ships. The government police-order, and the theatre-bill side by side, with the slovenly print smudged and damp, fresh stuck upon the walls. The spirit-shops—dark little holes like cellars—the abodes of vice and pestilence, the haunts of sailors of the worst class. Then there is the cathedral, which we saw from the heights of St. Giorgio, a noble edifice in the centre of the town. It is remarkable for a gateway adorned with marble carvings, and for some immense columns of Egyptian granite, taken from an ancient temple of Neptune. But not even the dim religious light of the aisles, or the conversation of a noble gentleman whom we suppose to be the beadle, can detain us from the healthy wooing of the westerly wind, and the fascinating attractions without.

I love the jolly poverty, the graceful picturesque buffooneries, the pleasant rogueries of Italian street-life. Who can help being amused at that itinerant auctioneer impudently vaunting his wares? His stock is composed chiefly of printed cottons for sailors' wives—and a throng of those vivacious ladies cluster round him, wrangling joyously. A withered retired official passes by the while. He has a young wife on one arm, and that unequivocal proof of respectability, an extremely baggy umbrella, on the other. He looks sourly at the boisterous crowd.

I follow an individual in a grand cavalry cloak; he turns out to be a fiddler, and stopping before the door of a shop he has

carefully singled out, he takes the instrument from his breast with a villanous wink, and begins to play upon it. His advent is followed by laughter and scuffling from within. Presently a bouncing lass escapes, flustered and blushing, from her tormentors, and appears at the door; she orders the fiddler, with an air of burlesque command, to desist. This of course makes the dog play faster, and at last he capers and sings till the poor girl suffers a merry martyrdom, and throws him quite a shower of coppers to go away.

The good-humour of everybody is delightful. A young woman is dealing out spoonful of a dirty stew of fish and garlic. I stop, and she beckons me near, holding the mess up for inspection with a frank simplicity, and enters at once into confidential discourse, with a cheerful voice quite exhilarating. A two-wheeled bullock-cart passes by us; in it are a sad lean man, and a fat good liver. They look like tragedy and comedy. They are seated on the edge of a bulky cask of the rough wine of Milazzo, which the Sicilians love. A group of roystering urchins hang swinging on behind, and near them walks a woman with a saddle on her head.

Let us saunter on, past yonder little shops, which seem built for a population of dwarfs. They are filled with water-coloured daubings of saints and virgins, framed and glazed, to be sold to the peasantry on market-days. Let us peep into the tall private houses, with their massive stone walls, which keep out the fierce heats of summer; their dark passages leading nowhere, and iron railings on the landings of their solid staircases. Then let us make our bow to the beauty of the *Café Nuovo*, the toast of Messina, and go our ways. We shall soon find a crazy old boat to take us back to the Thabor. That boat is manned by two of the handsomest and laziest sailors I have ever seen; one spreads his handkerchief on the decayed and broken seat, and sitting down quietly, watches his companion, who, by a series of short slow back-strokes, ladles rather than rows us along. The sea is like a mirror, though we are in January. Waifs and strays of golden orange-peel bob and float upon it. We can see the corpulent little fish make their toilettes, and whisk about wooing or foraging in its limpid depths. A white round fort, with sky-blue guards and a red sentry-box peeping over the top-most tower, stands at a little distance. We hear some French officers laughing at it as we glide imperceptibly to the steamer's side. There the easy-going boatmen wish us a good voyage for three francs, and spoon themselves leisurely back to shore again, a love-song springing naturally to their lips.

I could not help thinking, as I stepped on board, and my mind reverted to the subject, what a precious and bountiful gift is the

habit of observation. Who, that have cared to cultivate it, cannot remember with overflowing gratitude the days of unavailing sorrow it has spared them, the painful memories it has banished, the grief it has restrained? How it has brightened away the gloom of solitude, filling it with fairy visions! How independent it has made them of narrow fortunes, petty injustice, ungenerous persecution, hope deferred, the desertion of friends, and the sneer of fools! How soothingly it has whispered to them the noble lesson of endurance; hushed unworthy murmurs, by instilling compassion for the ills of others; and taught them at length to smile upon sorrow, sent only to break the chain that keeps us from Heaven! How it has chastened desire, and inspired content with little, by showing that they who have much are not therefore happier, but have ever some spectre at their feast; and that to raise our condition is only to change, not to diminish, our common burthen! How it teaches self-reliance to expect no help from others, and yet begets charity for errors and imperfections, which are perceived, in time, to be inseparable from humanity!

Then the world is so various and so beautiful in its shifting hues. Life has for an observer such a quick succession of interest and amusing adventure, that it is almost inconceivable he should ever feel dull or weary of it. No one day resembles another. Every hour, every minute, opens new stores to our experience and new excitements to our curiosity. We are always on the eve and on the morrow of some novel and surprising event. Like the moth, we are for ever flying towards a star—but with this difference, that we attain it: and if sometimes we find that the halo we fancied a glory is but some deceiving mist, at least we have learned a lesson. If we look upon life merely as humble students, we shall not feel any great bitterness at such disappointments. It is only when we hug our ignorance to our hearts that we are, and deserve to be, miserable—when we embrace the cloud, that we lose the goddess. But if we open the eyes of the mind, and determine to be neither wantonly stupid nor inattentive, an enchanted world begins to rise from chaos. The aspect even of the room in which we sit grows lively with a thousand unsuspected curiosities. We discern that the most ordinary person is invested with some noticeable characteristic. If we deign to look but for five pleasant minutes at any commonplace thing, we become aware of its peculiar beauty: and there is not a bird that wings through the air, nor a flower that blossoms in the garden; nor an insect that crawls in the depths of the earth; nor a fish that swims the water, but has its own singular and delightful story.

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THEATRICAL ASHES.

"At what time did you come home last night?"

"About two."

"Then you don't know the news?"

"No—what?"

"Covent Garden Theatre is burnt to the ground!"

"O! nonsense!"

This conversation was shouted through the door that separated my brother's bedroom from my own. There appeared something so preposterous in the idea of Covent Garden Theatre ever being burnt down—of those stone corridors along which we were accustomed to walk, Gibus hat and double lorgnette in hand—that broad magnificent staircase, with its marbled pillars and bronzed wickets—that grand portico with its massive columns, under which the stream of carriages flowed so continuously and commodiously—ever becoming what the papers call, a prey to the devouring element, despite its ostrich-like capacity of digestion, that I simply expressed my disbelief in the announcement, and turned round for another ten minutes' doze. But when I further heard that the news, first communicated by the milkman, and then strengthened by the housemaid next door (one of whose gentlemen had been out all night, and only just come home, such a figure as she never see), was finally corroborated by a few damp lines in the Times, I expressed my feelings in a word or two, which might not appear so pardonable in type as they did in the startle of the intelligence, and jumped out of bed. In another quarter of an hour I was on my way to Bow Street in a Hansom.

There was no want of evidence that a great excitement was stirring all London. It was now about nine o'clock, and an unwonted rush of cabs and people, all going one way, was perceptible even in Oxford Street. Down Crown Street and across Seven Dials the crowd kept hurrying on; and as there must have been a similar pressure from all directions, it can be conceived that Long Acre was completely jammed up and impassable.

I have the doubtful advantage of being "known to the police," and I was soon per-

mitted to shoulder my way through the human barrier that closed the top of Bow Street. Once inside this, I was master of as sad a view as could fall to the lot of an ordinary Londoner to gaze upon. Some huge bare, blackened walls, with square perforations, from which the firemen, with their hatchets, were crashing the remaining glass and window-frames for the hose to enter; a roofless portico still plastered with tawdry posting-bills; a few charred and shortened beams seen through the window-holes, still blazing, and every now and then coming down with a great fall upon the embers below; and everywhere within the boundary walls a haze of smoke and flashes and flying tons of water coming from unseen supplies, and spluttering, hissing, and crackling against the glowing ruins in all directions;—this was all that occupied the spot where Covent Garden Theatre stood not half-a-dozen hours before.

The crowd that gazed with me on all this devastation was a very peculiar one. It was purely theatrical. As bees return and haunt the spot where a hive has been destroyed or despoiled, so did these people assemble about the wreck of the playhouse. They all knew one another, even to the inmates of the houses opposite, whose interests were more or less wound up with the mammoth establishment no longer existing; and they had all some dreadful story to tell of some acquaintance, more or less apocryphal, who had lost everything. The amount of personal effects recklessly left about in a theatre by those to whom a superfluity of anything may be considered rather as the exception than the rule, was marvellous. And they all knew the particular individual who had discovered the fire, and saved the property, and cleared the house, and knew more about it all than anybody; and this was always somebody else; and they all gravely asserted that the truth would never be known, which, from the utter and absolute destruction of everything, appeared more than probable.

As I stood in the doorway of the gas-fitter's shop a little knot of spectators were exchanging anecdotes. They had all the shaved face, hard red chapped skin, blue temples, and colour-gone olive-green frock-coat of the entire professional.

"He's a raging maniac!" one said.

"It took six policemen to carry him out of the house by force, and put him in a cell for security; and he only keeps on crying out 'Throw me in the flames!'"

"When Weston went back to see if he could save the double-bass," said a property-man, "he found two Don Cæsar de Bazans dancing the polka together and everything in a blaze, and he had some job to get 'em out; and when they come into the street all the crowd set on 'em and hooted 'em, and cried out, 'Who burnt the theatre?' 'Who set it a fire?' they cried; and they was close upon having a nasty time of it, if they hadn't gone into the coffee-shop."

"Arry's took to it worse than any," observed an evident super; "he says his benefit's ruined, but they give him a sleepy-draught, and he's up in that room there, where the blind's down—that's where he is."

Putting the benefit and the house together I found out who 'Arry was, and hoped he would recover for the evening's rally.

"All the tricks are saved," said another; "and they found the goose down Mrs. Warner's rails at the back of the Bedford, just as if nothing had happened."

I felt that this must be the goose who came out of the flat portfolio, and I rejoiced at his preservation. It struck me, however, that there were still some guinea-pigs and pigeons to account for. I was less anxious about the canary who was fired out of the gun, rammed down with a gold watch for a wad, because he was, in a degree, inured to surprises and explosions.

The group moved on—at the order of a myrmidon—and I was left to my own reflections. I remembered the scene in the pantomime lately played there, where the knockers spontaneously aroused the people in the fire scene. With that belief in actuality which we can never separate from a pantomime, I wondered if all the knockers begun to rap as usual when the real fire broke out, confusing that power with the necromancer's bell in the gallery, and table in the pit. Then I lamented—I believe with everybody—the really miserable end of such a splendid building. If it was fated to be burnt down, the fire should have burst out—provided all could have got away—in the last scene of *Le Prophète*, with Mario singing the drinking song, surrounded by his beautiful bacchantes, as the flames began to lap and twine about the gilded doors and costly draperies of the palace of Munster. But it was saddening to think of the low, dull, brutal orgy that had immediately preceded, and perhaps hastened, the catastrophe. I heard that such a scene of vicious riot and rampant snobbery had never before been witnessed in London.

"It's burst out again over the property-room," said a fireman to his fellow as they passed.

Here was enough matter for speculation connected with departed glories. Many were thinking of the manuscripts, the scores, and the documents destroyed; my mind wandered to humbler things. I wondered at what time was burnt the letter B, that Gennaro cut with his dagger from over the Borgia's door—always of a different colour to the "orgia," and palpable as to its destination. I wondered, also, how long it took to melt the Norma gong; how soon to consume the fish that were thrown up to the *pescatori* on the sunny strand of Portici; how rapidly the red candles must have melted, that adorned the chandelier in the act of the Huguenots; and whether the Der Freischütz owl winked when the flames deranged his machinery. And I pictured the general and hurried destruction of the Druids' beards, and Mario's long chocolate-coloured boots, and the bright breastplate in which Soldi sang the Rataplan—the Somnambula mill-wheel, with the candlestick that Viardot let fall from it, and the padded bricks she pushed aside with her feet when the plank cracked; the sword that Tagliafico cracked across his knee, when he declared he was not an assassin—the profile horse of the statue in Don Giovanni; and the pony chaise that brought on Ronconi in the *Elisir*.

A thundering crash interrupted the meditations.

"Down at last!" said a fireman.

"What's down?" I asked.

"The top-stairs of the perscenum boxes; they've been hanging by nothing ever since it broke out."

I remembered the stairs. I had gone up them the last time I was at the theatre, getting there late to join some friends—after a public occupation of my own—to see the end of the *Favorite*. And this was really within these four smoking, blackened, boundaries! It was here that I had beheld that most impressive scene that had scarcely ever been surpassed upon the stage—that beautiful abbey with its lofty, half-ruined roof, through the chinks of which the grey dull morning light was beginning to steal, in fine contrast with the dim lamps hung along the aisles, the illuminated windows of the chapel in which the early mass was being performed, and the glowworm glimmer of the lanterns, passing amongst the columned walls of the cemetery, where the monks were digging their own graves. I recalled the rapt and breathless silence of the vast and brilliant audience, as the frail and beautiful, and broken-hearted woman came in her monastic disguise to seek him whom alone she loved in the world; and how in that wildly, despairing and lovely burst of song she poured out her life at his feet. All the real and actual dissolved away—the ruins, the crowd, the torrents of clear water in the kennels, the prison-van at the door of the police-office; and in their place the grim circle of monks were crowding

round the dead body, chanting the ghastly *De Profundis*, as the curtain came down like a huge pall, and the audience scarcely dared to break the almost painful silence by the burst of applause for the magnificence of the representation.

I was sitting that night—it was well advanced—in the coffee-room of an adjoining hotel where everybody was talking about the fire; and one man, who, I was certain, had not been there at all, was informing an admiring circle, how he believed he had saved the music-room, by directing the firemen to play on it. (We all know how amateurs' directions are likely to be received by the brigade, at the height of a great conflagration.) I was sitting here, I say, listening, like everybody else, more to the general topic than to a lyrical chronicle of how "the hardy Norseman's house of yore" had ruled the stormy sea, which was being sung at the end of the room—when an esteemed friend, who had been more concerned in the calamity than most people, suggested that we should go and see the ruins at night. He was in authority. The policemen put the crowd on one side, and touched their hats as we passed; the firemen cautioned us not to tumble over the hose, and the superintendent directed us to the best point of view, which was in Hart Street, with an intimation not to keep there longer than we could help, as the huge back wall of the theatre was already giving.

Impressive as the sight had been in the day-time, it was nothing compared to that now before us. We were at the extreme back of the stage, looking right over the glowing area of the entire building to the southern wall, against which the coats and bonnets used to hang on the left of the pit-entrance in Bow Street. A stranger would not have discovered one single object whereby to trace the different portions—stage, auditory, or approaches—of what had once been the theatre; all was destroyed! I had never seen so vast a ruin. It reminded me—as it did many others—of the Colosseum. Indeed, it could be compared to little else; nothing in Pompeii would have over-topped the first-floor. Every combustible remnant was still a-light. Flames were creeping out from crevices high up in the walls, as they do from large pieces of coal when it first breaks. The Queen's Entrance was still literally a bon-fire, and every now and then a burning beam came down and a large and momentary fire-work of sparks and stars marked its fall. But it was on the ground that the most startling effect was produced. The entire area formed a black plot, so to speak; from which arose countless points of light, that I could compare to nothing better than crocuses of fire. There were myriads and myriads of these beaks of flame and of all colours—red, and blue, and bright green, and

yellow—twinkling about as one has observed in illumination-lamps put on the ground at public gardens. Now and then, as the hose of some engine deluged them, a great black void appeared, and this could be traced, as the stream fell, all across the ground. But it burst out again in a minute. By-standers suggested it was the coloured fires used in the theatre which produced this effect; but they were wrong. The intense heat and the water together had given rise to many chemical combinations that tinged the flames, to which the mineral colours used in distemper painting largely contributed.

Preceded by a fireman, with a lantern, we entered the old box-office, and then went along the ruins parallel with Bow Street, until we came to the grand entrance. The magnificent staircase was covered with the same crocus-like lights, and edged by split and broken columns, like cemetery monuments. The hall where the footmen were accustomed to wait was choked up with beams, joists, twisted gas-fittings, bits of scorched red fabric—half cloth half tinder—puddles of water and ashes, and now and then showers of fire from embers high above. Add to this the cries of the firemen, the measured double-beat of the engines, the hissing and slapping of the water as it flew against the walls, and an occasional explosion in the interior, and it will be perceived that no ordinary sight presented itself.

"This is a sad sight, sir," said an old professional, who, wrapped in one of those cloaks peculiar to his calling, was watching the crocuses like myself. "It would have broken poor Mr. Kemble's heart. I was saying to-day, I met him coming out of this very door when Mr. Albano's men began to alter the house in 'forty-seven, and he said he had been to see the last of poor Covent Garden, and appeared completely upset. But he never thought it would have an end like this!"

I left the spot, for it was now very late, and walked home alone, pondering on the actor's words; for they had given rise to another train of recollections. Covent Garden was the first theatre I had ever been taken to. I was put to bed in the middle of the day, the better to enable me to face the late hours; and I saw King Lear and Cherry and Fair Star; but all I can recollect was that I was taken into the saloon to have a glass of wine and water and a macaroon between the plays, and that there was a large ship with spangled sails, which, I have always had an impression, sailed right round the pit; but this must have been a confusion of ideas resulting from the utter bewilderment in which I passed the evening.

But I had clearer notions of many other later and pleasant things—of being over head and ears in schoolboy-love with Fanny Kemble, and saving four weeks' allowance to go to the gallery, and see her in Juliet; and,

after, watching the robbery of the Bath Mail, and hearing "Hurrah for the Road!" in Paul Clifford. It was also at Covent Garden that I had first seen childhood's notions of fairy-land realised, as Beauty and the Beast, The White Cat, The Sleeping Beauty in the Wood, and a long train of glittering personages swept by. I had seen the Court of Comus here, and heard Cool deny that Charles was Sir Harcourt Courtney's son; and had vivid recollections of the unpleasant night that Mr. W. H. Payne passed in the Great Bed of Ware—of the thump he got on the back of his head from the archway, as he bowed to his retainers, as Guy Earl of Warwick, whilst carried into his castle on their shoulders—of the heedless manner in which he shut his own same head into the Otranto helmet! Much more than this I thought about. But my last recollection connected with the theatre, before its change, was seeing the old spiral staircase, down which Aladdin wound to the enchanted gardens, and a rat-eaten wicker-and-canvass elephant—it was once Bluebeard's—going off piecemeal in a wagon, having been purchased by a country manager, when the rout of properties took place.

I hear that the theatre is never to be rebuilt, but that a market for poultry is to occupy its site. Boaden reports John Kemble to have said, on the morning after the fall of Covent Garden the First, in eighteen hundred and eight, "Of all this vast treasure, nothing now remains but the arms of England over the entrance of the theatre, and the Roman eagle standing solitary in the market-place."

I would have a souvenir of the late theatre also in the market-place. It should be a fountain, the basin supported by Norma, Don Giovanni, Dulcamara, Valentine, Maffeo Orsini, and Fides; and on the top I would have a statue, suggested by the antique, of Mario sitting amongst the ruins of Covent Garden.

POISON.

CLEMENT THE SEVENTH, it was thought, died of the fumes of a poisoned torch carried before him in pontifical procession. Cleopatra was supposed to have sent Antony his death as a love-gift in the odour of a poisoned flower. Scaliger says that the Turks, who were great riders, had a subtle way of poisoning the saddles of their private enemies, and this was tried against a high person in England, but without success. The seats of chairs, gloves, letters, handkerchiefs, salves, and perfumes, it was thought, might be impregnated with death. Linnæus states that both the Emperor Henry the Fourth and a Duke of Savoy were destroyed by the smell of poisoned gloves. Less than a hundred years ago, it was believed that the saliva of an angry person is a deadly poison, and it

certainly was one of the ingredients in that drug of which the common name told the familiar use—succession powder.

Such fears survive only as pleasant fables, but they once had terrible significance. When lust and wrath were little bridled, and to hate a man meant actively to wish him dead; when to be checked in a career meant almost as frequently by foul as fair means to endeavour to remove the check; when lawlessness was strong and law was weak; when to give poison was easy, and to prove that it had been administered was, in most cases, beyond the skill of chemist or physician; then it was that the dread of foul play rose incessantly to warn off man from man. "Never," said an old physician to his children, "take choice morsels from strangers, or without knowing whence they come. When you are invited to a feast, if you must go, take heed of the faith of those who bring the cup to you."

It is to be remembered, too, that an imperfect power of detection not only increased the danger by allowing to the secret criminal no slight hope of impunity, but increased the dread by leaving men open to belief, concerning any sudden or strange death, that it was caused by treachery. In the middle ages, and until at least the close of the seventeenth century, we rarely find it chronicled that a man died unexpectedly, except it be with the addition of the phrase, "not without suspicion of poison." Epidemics were ascribed most commonly to poisoned wells; and, many an innocent community of Jews has paid in massacre and persecution cruel penalty for the afflictions of their neighbours—caused by poison, doubtless, but most commonly by poison brewed of filth in their own dwellings.

Not only did a want of certain knowledge aggravate dread of the subtlety of those drugs which waste life by a slow torture or destroy it in a sudden agony—which, having been imbibed as welcome perfume, drank with the wine, or eaten with the meat, suffocate, convulse, strike with palsy, perhaps lurk for months inactive, and then, when the secret assassin has assured his own escape, suddenly kill. Great as it was, the fear of poison did not end with this. There was one word of old for both the poisoner and sorcerer. Because knowing too little, ready to believe too much, physicians and philosophers then taught the world that herbs fitly chosen, when impregnated with forces brought down from the stars, could be made capable of influencing not life only, but also fortune. By means of ointment rubbed upon the eyelids, any person evil-minded might increase the force of a malignant current from the eyes, which should pass through the eyes of any victim, and fall as a curse upon his soul. There were herbs that would transform men into wolves; there were even words so poisonous that by the utterance of them a man's cattle could be smitten with disease,

his child condemned to waste and wither into idiocy at the mother's breast.

There was no doubt equal credulity concerning antidotes, and use was made of charms as a protection against poisoning or sorcery. But if the charms gave some sense of security, they also did much to keep fear alive by serving constantly as technical reminders of the danger.

Let it not be said, therefore, of any poisoner who lives or has lived in our day, that he or she carries our minds back to the days of Borgia or Brinvilliers. Of all the old times that are gone, there is none gone more completely and more finally than the old time when to take heed against poison was one of the waking thoughts common to all; when deadly poison, it was thought, might be administered either by look or word as well as by deed, and when life was made uneasy by the constant rising of a horrible mistrust. For centuries this terror was an element of social life in Europe, and if it was greater than the danger, yet the danger was not small. Death feuds were frequent, lust of gain was held less in check than it is now; a man's life was of less account than we now make it, and the means of positive detection were so utterly inadequate, that a remote possibility of rack and stake, when weighed against the certainty of gain, pressed little on the mind of any criminal. "See!" said the Marchioness Brinvilliers, when she came home one evening elated from a festival, and was in her own chamber with her waiting-maid; "see," she said, taking up a little box, "I keep here my vengeance on my enemies—small as the casket is, it is full of rich inheritances!" Parricide, fratricide, she only waited detection; but her torture, her public humiliation, and her execution, by both sword and fire, did not abate the crime, and the *Chambre Ardente*—established afterwards for the detection and the execution of sharp justice upon poisoners—found women engaged in business among rich and noble ladies, who ran up small bills for articles of sorcery and poison. And that happened towards the close of the seventeenth century, when increasing knowledge had already told with some effect against the vague fears that attend on ignorance and superstition.

For, by the growth of knowledge, hitherto the history of Europe, as regards these subjects, has been wonderfully changed; and from its growth hereafter greater changes will result. The development of the natural sciences operated first in the most direct way by dispelling, one by one, the theories of nature on which superstition rested; and on which, indeed, it had in former times a right to rest. The superstition of which those disjointed fragments that remain among our untaught classes now seem to be inconsequent absurdities, all belonged once to a system which the greatest thinkers of antiquity had formed. All belonged to a specu-

lative theory of the universe, which in its time was worthy of the men who framed it.

Among the untaught outcasts of society in London alleys, or in rustic hovels, scholars may yet hear snatches of what they have read in Plato or in Aristotle, or of what has entertained them in the works of Pliny. As the truths of nature were unfolded, one by one, the theories constructed to explain its mysteries disappeared, and with them went faith in the subtle powers of the sorcerer. There remained only the substantial poison to be dreaded.

If a mass of ignorance had not maintained some of the old vague terror, there was certainly a time when credulity would have been changed for a too easy confidence; when the old world of mystery born out of speculation was left out of sight, and the new world of mystery acquired by long experience and study, had indeed been entered, but was unexplored. Science advances, and the truths discovered, the results achieved by use of such truths, prove to be more wonderful than anything that ancient sages had supposed in place of them, or any magical effects said to be possible as the result of acting on such suppositions. We have gone back, in one sense, to the old days of constant watching against poison. We are conscious of more poisoning than ever men were in the worst age of Italian profligacy. We dread it of nights. We see it streaming to us on the breath of a companion. We inquire actively as to its presence in our bread, and in our wine, and in our sauce. We clamour against poisoned wells. These things were done of old, because of ignorance; they are done now, because of knowledge. It may be said that the extremes have met, yet certainly there is no likeness between them. Our modern dread of poison, in as far as it is general involves no fear of hatred or malice, and tends to the opposite of all uncharitableness. We see little or nothing of what our forefathers saw, and they saw little or nothing of what we now see. All that we fear with reason, they had in a worse form, and for want of knowledge feared it not. They breathed foul air in all their habitations, heaped up filth in all their streets; they drank infected water, breathed miasma, ate unwholesome food, and saw no harm in any of these things. Their fears have gone from us. We dine or sup with friends, and are at ease. We may think there is prussic acid in the custard; but we do not want to question our friend with the thumb-screw, or to put him on the rack for that. Detection of poisoning meant only in old times vengeance upon some body and a putting to death; now it leads only to mercy, and the saving of much life. I know no better monument commemorating such a truth as this than Broad Street Pump.

The Broad Street pump is in the neighbourhood of Seven Dials, on the edge of one

of the great Jew's quarters in London. It is over a well of which the water was in much request, and was, indeed, so popular that bottles of it used to be conveyed weekly by a carrier to one admirer living at a distance. During the last visitation of cholera, mortality was great in and about Broad Street, and came to be traced eventually to the pump; for it was noticed that when water from that pump was taken, disease came with it. It went with it even in the bottles of the carrier. Here was a poisoned well destroying Christians, and in its immediate proximity to the Jews' quarter! Men of the good old times would have declared the guilt of the Jews manifest. They would have been fallen upon and plundered; their young children would have been brained against the door-posts, women stabbed, men killed by torture; their houses would have been burnt, and their land confiscated. As it was, nobody thought of sacking Seven Dials, tempting as the spoil might seem. Probably until this hour it never entered anybody's head even to imagine that the Jews might be considered punishable; although, a few centuries ago, that would have been the first opinion, and the only one, in almost every part of Europe. As it was, we looked into the well, found the contents of an old sewer oozing into it, and understood at once the mischief, and the way, by curing it, to save life and save health in future.

The botanist and zoologist, the mineralogist and chemist, have by parallel advances given great precision to our knowledge of the action of all kinds of food, and all drugs known as medicine or poison. The anatomist having minutely demonstrated the structure of the body, not overlooking so much as a thread of nerve, a pin's head's prominence upon a bone, or a gland upon a membrane; the microscopist having helped the physiologist to unravel the mysteries of healthy structure, and to trace as a pathologist the several changes worked by each form of disease; the body of man after death is becoming year after year more surely a revealer of the secrets that concerned its life. The vestiges of past disease, and more especially the nature of that last disorder against which the breath of life could not maintain its own, are written in the body of the dead. Much of this kind of writing is not yet deciphered; but among the most readable, the most completely read is that which records death by violence or poison. To the man of science now, blood literally testifies against the secret poisoner, wounds are dumb mouths no more, but can give utterance to truths full of significance. Science which saves life, also brings conviction home against the man by whom it is destroyed. Here, then, we have the true defender and adviser of society, at any rate, in all matters concerning the protection of our bodies against poison. To this point, but not quite to the proper recognition of it, we have, in

the course of social progress, found our way. Self-interest now directs us to its recognition.

For our well-being—moral as well as material—it is of great importance that, even at the cost of reading less of Plato, Aristotle, and Pliny, far more time than has hitherto been given should be given to the diffusion of a knowledge of those truths in natural history and science by which the speculations of the ancients and the superstition of the later generations have been melted into thinnest air: to which we owe all that is most substantial in the increase of the world's well-being—ships, steam-vessels, factories, railways, electric-telegraphs, pleasant and healthy abodes, various and wholesome food,—out of which all that is most substantial in our future progress must proceed; by which we are brought more and more into beneficial relations with our race, help to man being fetched by it exclusively from study of the works of God, and through which our imagination is encouraged to take only noble flights. It is the staff given into man's hand with power in it, as of Aaron's rod. It is of use daily, and he stumbles often who is not provided with it.

In the Museum at Kew Gardens, Sir William Hooker has felt it to be right to exhibit, side by side, horseradish and aconite, and write on a label underneath the differences that exist between the two. He has done this because over and over again aconite has been pulled for horseradish; not long ago, several members of a little dinner-party in Scotland were added at one stroke to the roll of victims sacrificed to this mistake. The instance is typical of thousands, varying in nature and degree of urgency, but all bearing upon the fact that the routine of schools has been left far behind by the activity of energetic study of the works of God.

Were there diffused more general knowledge of the main branches of science, there would be no slowness in the public to perceive the good uses to which they can turn the most expert and acute of professed scientific men. There can be no fact more unnatural than that a man who has acquired mastery over any department of science should be without a vocation in society that will assure him a good livelihood and ample honour. Our reproach on this score, no doubt, lessens annually. Upon the chemist known to be profoundly versed in his own art, the requirements of the judge and jury, of the manufacturer, the trader, and the farmer, press; business flows in to him; and it is already evident that there is being opened here a lucrative profession for philosophers in the next generation—noble addition to the ancient group, law, physic, and divinity. Again, to pass from natural to what is called pure science, we find the higher mathematics more and more brought into use for the settlement of questions that arise out of the common business of life.

The day, indeed, may not be very distant when a senior wrangler shall set up in practice, and become the Brodie or the Brougham of his brotherhood.

We can dwell on this topic only in as far as it relates to the detection of poisoning, and the abatement of it. For this we depend wholly upon men by whom natural science and philosophy have been carefully studied. For the detection and reduction or suppression of the poison in the air of towns, in food, in dwellings, or arising out of the old unhealthy practices that have not been discarded yet from the routine of trade, we need the services of such a board of men as we are already beginning here and there to employ, in the shape of Officers of Health. These should be men not simply qualified to write after their names M.R.C.S. and L.S.A., but persons who have maintained a continuous attention to the mysteries of nature, and have shown that they possess a spirit of inquiry and the necessary patience in research. Here, then, is another field of labour for society—another great profession—into which the steady course of civilisation is now leading us to see that men of science must be called.

Not long ago, a sick person dealing with a herbalist, died suddenly. A very harmless herb only had been asked for, but suspicion arose that a very deadly herb was the one given. To try the matter, the same herb was again asked for, and, from an unsorted heap, the old woman by whom the herb-shop was kept, delivered a parcel of belladonna, than which no plant growing in this country yields more deadly poison. How many more than the one known death had this misplaced heap of belladonna caused? If it be due to the liberty of the subject that as any quack may sell any amount of drastic medicine to be swallowed in pills blindly, without check or counsel, so any crone may retail to the public death-dealing herbs; yet at least let there be some little oversight applied—let there be some little of the light of knowledge cast over the dark corners of civilisation. No one can sell without a licence pepper, snuff, and tobacco; any one may sell to the ignorant poor, dried herbs with which to kill or cure themselves. If herbalists were not allowed to trade without a licence and a registration of their shops, and if herbalists' shops were submitted to the inspection of a person in each district, having a competent knowledge of medical botany, the keepers of them (who can have no wish to destroy life) might be guided and restrained from mischief without any undue infringement of their liberty.

Then, again, as regards hurtful adulterations; there will be an end of them when systematic use is made of scientific knowledge. To sell an article for what it is not, is a fraud—a lie; and it is indisputable that the suppression of all secret and inten-

tional adulteration would be not merely a great gain to society, but a great gain to the interests of trade. To detect and punish such adulteration is as much a duty to just-minded tradesmen as to those who buy of them; and to suppress at least poisonous adulteration, if it be possible to be done, is a distinct obligation on the state, of which to protect life is by no means the least important function. A permanent committee of five or six persons, who possess the best attainable knowledge of chemistry, botany, and natural history, aided by a simple machinery of inspection, and subordinated, perhaps, to the General Board of Health, might not only keep down all practices of deleterious adulteration, but might even supply particular trades with a great many of those points of scientific information which they have not yet turned to the right account. Thus, Dr. Taylor, in his recent evidence before a committee of the House of Commons, pointed out, that while risks are run daily, and many lives lost yearly, by the prussic acid that exists often in large quantities in the almond flavour used by cooks and confectioners, and bought by housekeepers without a syllable of warning as to poison, there is no need at all of either giving up the flavour, or of risking life for love of it. "The prussic acid," he said, "may be separated from the oil, which is then free from danger. The flavour and odour are chiefly owing to the oil, quite independent of the acid; and there is no excuse for the use of it, except laziness and ignorance." Let then, trade and science come into relation with each other by help of a well-devised committee, competent not only to check dishonest practices, but to assist honest endeavours. We would suggest that it might be authorised to call juries of able men engaged in any branch of trade, to whom they should propose sanitary or other improvements in the ordinary practice of their calling, and by whom they might be instructed concerning any practical difficulties to be overcome, before publishing, endorsed by its own jury—such suggestions to the trade they were designed to benefit.

Every medical man knows well the grave need that exists for a strict supervision of the quality of certain drugs kept in the chemists' shops. An able physician may with a prescription faultless in itself damage to a very serious extent his patient's health, through ignorance of a defect that ought not to exist in the drugs used. To take an obvious example; there is diversity over a wide range at chemists' shops in respect to the strength of laudanum. The physician knows only the rule, that in so many drops of laudanum one grain of opium shall be contained, and he prescribes accordingly. Yet the unlucky patient may get of this powerful drug a proper dose, a half-dose, or a double dose. Taking all chemists' shops into consideration, it may even be said, that he

is almost as likely to get the one dose as the other, and that he is not at all likely to get precisely the amount of opium prescribed. There are some thirty drugs, of which it is in this way important that a standard quality should be demanded of all dealers, as decidedly as we demand the use of standard weights and measures. We must, bring, therefore, the scientific chemist to our aid.

Then, as to the deliberate sale of poison to a general customer at chemists' shops. A complete interdict would lead of course to many inconvenient results, and might possibly defeat its own intention. Probably it would be enough to add to the existing law concerning the sale of poison, obligation upon druggists to sell poison, or medicine in poisonous quantities, only to applicants whom they know personally, and to people bringing a prescription, or an order, written or countersigned by a qualified surgeon or physician, whose handwriting they can identify. Furthermore, that when poison is sold, even under these conditions, entry be made at the time, of the name and address of the purchaser, and not of the day only, but also of the time of day, when it was purchased. It is utterly impossible to put down suicide. If a man will kill himself, he can. Legislate, as we may, we shall attempt in vain to barricade his life inside his body; but, so far as poisons are concerned, we can surely almost put an end to death by accident, and place very substantial difficulties in the way of those who are devising secret murder. If he does not fear detection, it is not much more possible to frustrate the intentions of the murderer than of the suicide. We can rely only on the good that is in man, and on the influences of religion for the confidence we usually have in intercourse with one another. But the poisoner is commonly a coward, who employs a coward's weapon: he desires to strike his blow in the dark only. Happily, now the time is near, when, with the help of science, he who strikes by poison must be made to feel that there is noon-day light upon his deed. Let purchasers of poison be only henceforth as distinctly traceable as the effects of poison now have come to be, and bludgeon, rope, or knife will be less tell-tale weapons than the drug.

One most important feature in the modern history of poisoning remains to be considered. It is not to Brinvilliers but to Wainwright that our minds revert in reading of the use of poison by the murderers of our own day. Such crimes but rarely, as in the old times, arise out of the malice of a feud; nor is it quite in the old sense that greedy heirs use arsenic as a succession powder in the mere hastening of an inheritance that will accrue by lapse of time. Few men will now consent to bear the guilt of murder. Out of the practice of life insurance—noble fruit of the study of the higher branches of arithmetic—everyday reality, which blesses thousands at

their hearths and homes, although the produce of an abstract science,—out of an abuse of this element in modern civilisation a new race of poisoners has sprung. It includes those who poison to secure on death of one who is insured, large sums from the insurance offices, and those who destroy husbands and children for the few pounds assured to them at death in a burial-club. These crimes are known to be common, and are, perhaps, more common than we know. Inquiry made because of the disclosures in a recent case, has shown that suspicious applications are among the incidents of business known to every insurance company. The temptation is obvious. Successions and inheritances will come in due time; but by insuring a life and destroying it, thousands of pounds can, as it were, be called into existence as a prize attainable by the devices of the poisoner. The assassin sets his own price on his crime. In other words, through the intervention of an act of secret poisoning, insurance offices may be robbed as the guilty mind thinks at discretion. Even in the youth of the insurance system, this was seen; and, six-and-twenty years ago, the crimes of Wainwright set it openly before the public. Since that time the practice has continued; and among the poor, in the application of the system of mutual assurance to sick clubs and burial clubs, poisoners became so common, that of the burial clubs themselves, many fell out of use as horrible provocatives to crime.

With life insurance we associate most justly thoughts of all that is good, and wise, and prudent. A more beneficial result of knowledge is not to be found; and yet it is upon this that nearly the whole practice of secret poisoning now rests. It is well, therefore, in taking due precaution against the most dastardly of crimes, not only to show that acts of poisoning are losing rapidly, and shall lose yet more completely, the chance of secrecy on which they have depended, but also to destroy as much as possible the motive of the criminal. If solemn justice could be had in our law courts by rich and poor, subject to no extortion or delay, formal and public evidence of a sufficient interest might be required before any man was suffered to insure another's life. As the world goes, however, we must place our chief reliance on the stringency of the requirements that will henceforth be adopted by insurance companies for the protection both of their own funds and of the public safety.

CHIP.

BURNING A PRIEST.

SOME years since, when residing at Moulmeine, in Birmah, I witnessed an extraordinary ceremony: the burning of a deceased Poughy, or priest of the highest rank. These priests with their sunken eyes, high cheek-bones, and low foreheads, are perfectly hideous.

Although supported chiefly by charity, their habitations are always the handsomest, and are built on the most favourable site of the whole village. They never beg; but a certain number of them go out two or three times a week with a large earthen vase, held under the arm in a singular manner; walking slowly through the villages one after another, never raising their eyes, and silently stopping a few minutes before each house as they pass. Every villager contributes a portion of food; and on their return to the poughy-houses, the Poughies put part of what they have received in an open box or trough, placed in front of the Poughy-house, for their poorer brethren.

The Poughies wear a yellow robe, exactly resembling the Roman toga, made of cotton, silk, satin, or velvet, according to their rank. They are forbidden to hold any communication with women; who are not even allowed to enter any place of worship, but are obliged to transmit their offerings through their husbands, or any male relative, to the poughy, to present to their guadinah or god. This deity is a hideous earthen figure painted white, and represented in a sitting position. Sometimes the face is painted black; and, not unfrequently, half of the face is gilt, as a token of gratitude from some rich Birman, who has recovered from an illness, or some other misfortune. On one occasion, the Commissioner of Moulmeyne, assisted me to mount on a sort of raised bamboo terrace, on which a number of Poughies were squatted, in order to witness a boat-race. In passing by, a part of my dress accidentally touched one of them. The priest immediately rose in a violent rage, muttering unheard-of anathemas against me; and he and all his brethren retired in great disgust. I heard afterwards that the poor priest I had innocently victimised, was obliged to undergo severe penance to purify himself from the contamination of my unlucky garments.

When a Poughy of the highest order dies, they place the body in honey, and proceed to make a funeral car; which, as they beg great part of the material, takes some months to finish. The English blue and green finger-glasses, and pieces of broken glass and porcelain, are much prized by them for this purpose. I watched for many weeks the construction of a magnificent car they were building for the ceremony of burning the body of a Poughy of the highest rank, and was astonished by the taste and elegance displayed by these half savage Birmans. The pieces of coloured glass had been cut into leaves, and were inlaid in a graceful wreath round the body of the car; whilst the canopy or baldequin, which was supported by four columns ornamented in the same manner, was raised in the centre into a pinnacle, and attached by glittering chains to four smaller columns at each corner. On the day appointed for the ceremony, the body—which was care-

fully enveloped in a common yellow robe—was placed on the car, to which a number of stout ropes had been attached before and behind, and the ceremony of drawing it to the open space where the funeral pile had been erected, commenced. The women seized the ropes in front, and the men those behind. At every attempt of the women to draw the car onward, the men responded by drawing it back again, amidst shrieks and shouts of laughter. This extraordinary scene is supposed to typify the struggle between the good and bad spirits who had influenced the Poughy while living, for the possession of his body after death. After some hours, the fair sex came off victorious, and the car proceeded quietly on its journey. Whilst this scene was going on, the chiefs or head men of the neighbouring villages, accompanied by their respective followers,—who were distinguished by the peculiar colour of a kind of tartan silk, which is made in Birman, and which the men wear round their loins—conducted the immense rockets destined to blow up the funeral pile, to the open space. These rockets are formed of the trunk of a tree, which is hollowed out and filled with gunpowder of the coarsest kind, and which is laid on a rude carriage with four wheels. On the top of the rocket is placed, in a standing position, a large figure of a horse, an elephant, or a warrior; also filled with gunpowder. On this occasion, the white elephant—supposed to be a fac-simile of the far-famed and sacred one at Ava—was destined to be the cause of a tragical event and loss of life.

The car, having reached its destination, the body was taken from it and placed on the pile, which had been previously prepared. The rockets intended to ignite the pile were ranged, at a distance of about eight hundred yards, and either side of this space was crowded with spectators. The day was beautiful, and the position selected for this ceremony most picturesque. The glittering spires of the snow-white pagodas that crowned the neighbouring hills gleamed brightly through the trees; the gay-coloured silk dresses of the Birman women—in which red and yellow always predominate—and the scarlet coats of the British soldiers, added to the brilliancy of the scene, and gave it an appearance of gaiety little in accordance with the presence of death. At a given signal, a match was applied to the touch-hole of the first rocket, which had been placed opposite the pile but pointing in a diverse direction. On the application of the match, it suddenly wheeled round and rushed with great velocity towards the pile, amidst the shouts of the Birmans and cries of "Roundhi!—roundhi!" ("Good!—good!") Several others were fired in succession, and at last the white elephant rocket, which was of extraordinary dimensions, was placed in position. Every eye was turned towards it, and

the crowd on either side drew a little nearer to watch its progress. The match was applied and the rocket turned rapidly round and rushed on its headlong course—not, in the direction of the pile, but into the midst of the dense crowd who were eagerly watching it. As the engine of destruction drew near, the horrified spectators endeavoured, but in vain, to escape. Shrieks and groans of anguish were heard on every side. Seven unhappy beings were killed, and many others fearfully mangled. Still the white elephant rushed on with increased velocity, until—as if satisfied with its numerous victims—it burst with a terrific noise.

By this time the pile had been ignited, the body of the priest consumed, and the Poughies, who had silently withdrawn their car to serve for another occasion, returned in procession to their respective homes.

THE SEVEN VICTIMS OF MITTELBRON.

MITTELBRON is a little village in the jurisdiction of Phalsbourg, which in its turn is a little town at the foot of the Vosges, close to where the Rhine separates France from Germany. It is an obscure and insignificant place, hardly to be found upon any map. A dismal human tragedy was once acted there, more than ninety years ago.

Two Jews, brothers, lived at Mittelbron. They were both married, but occupied the same house. They were known to be rich: although they affected penury. They had one servant, Esther Levi, a Jewess, as her name certifies. On the night of the twenty-fourth of September, seventeen hundred and sixty-eight, a gang of robbers broke into the house of these Jews. They beat and greatly ill-used all the inmates; after which they searched the house, and carried off all it contained of any value. They took silver, plate, jewels, and money to the amount of forty thousand francs, and took their departure without hindrance or molestation.

The next morning the two Jews went before the criminal judge of Phalsbourg, and gave information of the robbery. They deposed that the band by whom they had been robbed was between twenty and thirty men strong; the greater number of these were entirely unknown to them, but there were seven German peasants, who lived at a small hamlet near Phalsbourg, called the Three Houses of Lutzelbourg; and the two Jews swore positively that they had recognised four of these men amongst the robbers. Although they would not swear to the identity of the other three, they could be nearly positive that they too had been amongst the band.

These seven Germans were peaceable, inoffensive, hard-working men; all of them married, and all of them with families, whom

they brought up to industry. They were the most unlikely people in the world to be mixed up with a deed of robbery and violence. Nevertheless, the robbery was a fact; and the Jews swore that four of the seven they had seen and recognised among the band, and strongly suspected the other three; although they would not swear to them with certainty. This cautiousness on the part of the two Jews seems to have been the point that bore the heaviest against the accused; who were forthwith seized and flung into separate dungeons. A great number of witnesses were called, who could throw no light whatever upon this audacious robbery, nor did anything come to light to criminate the accused men. The whole affair was involved in inexplicable mystery. The unfortunate prisoners were entirely ignorant of the language of the court in which their trial was conducted—they could only speak a rude patois; they were entirely ignorant of all they ought to do, and they were refused the assistance of counsel. What chance had these poor frightened peasants of asserting their innocence? True, there was no evidence against them: no trace of the stolen property in their possession; but then the two Jews who had laid the accusation were the witnesses also, and they swore positively to four of the prisoners, and expressed very little doubt about the others. The prisoners, through the interpreter, denied their guilt; but they were not believed by the court. The trial was soon over. They were found guilty, and here is the sentence:

“All things weighed and concluded, we declare,—Guillaume Braun, Matthijs Errette, Michel Fix, and Jean-Gaspard Beckvert, accused and convicted of having entered with force and violence on the night of the 24th of September, between ten and eleven o'clock at night, into the house of Moses Cerf and Solomon Cerf—Jews, dwelling at Mittelbron,—and of having violently ill-used both them and their wives, and their servant, Esther Levi, and of having broken open, with hatchets and blows, coffers and boxes, and of having stolen the contents thereof; it is ordained, by way of reparation, that the above-named prisoners are condemned to be hanged and strangled, until they are dead—upon a gibbet, to be erected for the purpose, in the place d'armes of this town (Phalsbourg); further we declare all their goods to be confiscated, fifty livres of restitution to go to the king in case that the whole confiscation does not go to his Majesty. The above-named prisoners are to be applied to the torture—ordinary and extraordinary—for the discovery of their accomplices. It is also ordered that Joseph Siégler, Louis Siégler, and Ulrich Becker, shall also be subjected to the torture—ordinary and extraordinary—to force them to confess all the facts of the robbery.

“Given in our presence, at which judgment Messire François Helorix, Conseiller du Roi and special lieutenant of this place; and M. Nicholas Demange, avocat, practising at the same place.

“Done and judged in the ordinary chamber of the place, the 10th of December, 1763.

“(Signed) Schneider, Helorix, et Demange.”

That same day the sentence was read to

the seven accused, who were advised to appeal to the parliament at Metz, which they did ; but the parliament at Metz followed in the steps of the judge of Phalsbourg ; and, on the seventeenth of February, seventeen hundred and sixty-nine, the sentence was confirmed.

This intelligence caused a great sensation at Phalsbourg, where all the population were in favour of the accused. They assembled in crowds round the Palais de Justice to catch sight of the prisoners and to express their sympathy. Nevertheless, justice took her blind course. The prisoners, one after the other, were brought from their cells into the justice-room. They fully expected it was preliminary to setting them at liberty. Instead of that, however, the interpreter pronounced against four of them the sentence of preliminary torture and then death ; against the others, torture ; but reserving the after sentence. They looked at each other with astonishment ; for they had never believed that their sentence could ever come really true.

All was ready in the torture-chamber. The judge was there to see, the clerk to write down what passed, and the interpreter stood ready to translate whatever their cries and shrieks might articulate in their agony. There was a surgeon also, to watch how far the torture might go without destroying the life, which was to be claimed by the executioner. All this terrible scene actually took place in the year of grace seventeen hundred and sixty-nine, in the month of February, at two o'clock in the morning ; which was the usual time for administering the torture. Guillaume Braun, being the youngest, was the first delivered over to the question. He uttered a wild, frightful cry of pain, which no one heeded. It was confession that was listened for, but none came. The torture was applied with cruel ingenuity, but Braun persisted in asserting his innocence, and the question continued until the surgeon interfered : the victim had to die elsewhere. Errette was the next ; but under the most horrible torments, he persisted in asserting his innocence. Michel Fix succeeded to him ; a vehement denial of all knowledge of the crime was all that the question could obtain. At last the four poor, mutilated men were thrown scarcely breathing, into the cart, and carried off to the gibbet, where death was at length allowed to end their sufferings.

All this constancy does not appear to have raised the slightest doubt in the mind of the stolid judge, with his fixed idea of their guilt. He proceeded stoically to witness the application of the torture to the remaining three ; against whom there was nothing but suspicion. When it came to the turn of the last, who was Ulrich Beckvert, the judge appeared anxious. Not one word of confession had been wrung from the previous six.

This was the last chance for justice to justify her course ; and accordingly this poor Ulrich was subjected to more severe handling than any of the rest ; but to all questions he returned an invincible, No ! It had now become a trial of strength between him and his judge, and the judge was foiled. Out of the whole seven, not one confessed. But their constancy did them no good. These three poor wretches who were only suspected had their sentence confirmed ; they were sent to the galleys for life,—for as much life at least, as was left in them. This was not the worst ; according to the existing laws, the crimes of the accused were to be visited upon every member of their families,—amounting to somewhere near forty souls in all. These unfortunate persons, in the depth of winter, had to abandon their homes ; and, utterly destitute (for everything they possessed was confiscated), they were sent forth to beg their bread, wherever they could find it in a strange land ; for, to their own village, they might never return again under pain of death. Great sympathy was felt for them,—none of the people believed the seven men were guilty ; it was only the judges who had no doubts.

The memory of this terrible tragedy had faded away. The Three Houses of Lutzelbourg had become a legend of the countryside : eighteen years passed, and no further light was thrown upon the robbery.

A troop of Bohemians had their headquarters in the forests round Mittelbron. They were the terror of the country, and committed the most frightful outrages far and wide. The band was so well organised that the combined efforts of all the authorities of the Duchies of Wurtemberg, and of Deux Ponts had long pursued them in vain,—but at last many of the gang were arrested, amongst the rest were two brothers, named Hannickel and Vincelas. They were imprisoned at Stultz, in Wurtemberg, where they were induced to make a confession of the crimes committed by the band, of which they had been the captains. Amongst many robberies they mentioned incidentally, that one night they had broken into the house of two rich Jews at Mittelbron, and carried off all they could find. They were examined separately, and their stories agreed in every particular. They stated that, on the twenty-fourth or twenty-fifth of September, in seventeen hundred and sixty-eight, their band, to the number of twenty-four, entered the house of Cerf Moses and Solomon Cerf, and carried off property to the amount of forty thousand francs. They named all the robbers who took a share in the expedition, and said that it was undertaken at the instigation of one Tangen Heuerlé, who was the only German in their band, and had pointed out to them the house of these two Jews, as being well worth plundering. When pressed to declare, if any of the

seven Germans who had been condemned for this crime had taken any part in it; they solemnly declared upon oath, that none of these seven men had ever belonged to their band, and that they were entirely unknown to them.

When these two robber-chiefs were told the history of the death and tortures of the seven innocent men and the dispersion and banishment of their families, steeped in crime as they were, their horror knew no bounds. Two other members of the band, confirmed the depositions of Hannickel and Vincelas. The chief magistrates of Stultz sent to the judge at Phalbourg, for the *procès-verbal* of the trial, and also for the declaration of the two Jews; but the conscience-stricken judge refused. Nevertheless, the bailli of Stultz obtained the proofs of the innocence of the seven men who had been condemned, and lost no time in laying them before the Duke of Wurtemberg. The duke gave orders that search should be made to see if any of the relatives of the unfortunate victims still survived; but eighteen years of sorrow and misery had done their work,—of the forty or fifty who had been driven from their homes, no more than eight remained. The duke sent the *procès-verbaux* which attested the innocence of their unhappy relatives, to his minister at the court of France, and desired him to take every means to obtain from the king the rehabilitation of their name, as the phrase was, when innocent people who had suffered were to have the ignominy cleared from their memory. An act was passed on the twentieth of February, seventeen hundred and seventy-seven, before the royal notaries at Phalsbourg, by which the widows of Ulrich and Gaspard Beckvert, the two brothers, and the widow of Michel Fix, the son and daughter of Ulrich Beckvert authorised the President Dupuits, to petition the king in their name for letters of revision of the sentence on the seven innocent men; which letters of revision were at length granted.

WATCH CRY.

FROM A GERMAN PATOIS SONG.

LISTEN, listen to the hour!

Ten strikes from the old church tower.

Now pray, and then lie down to rest,
Ye whose minds are calm and blest,
Sleep soft and well—in Heaven bright
An eye wakes for you all the night.

Listen, listen to the hour!

Eleven, from the old church tower.

Ye who still more labour find,
Ye who read with anxious mind,
Once more to God in Heaven pray,—
It is too late. Now sleep till day!

Listen, listen to the hour!

Twelve strikes from the old church tower.

Ye whom midnight still doth find
With aching heart and troubled mind,

God grant you now a quiet hour,
And guard and keep you by his power.

Listen, listen to the hour!

One strikes from the old church tower.

Ye who now with shame and fear,
Thieving, steal through pathways drear,—
I dare not hope,—but O! beware,
Though none are nigh, your Judge is there.

Listen, listen to the hour!

Two strikes from the old church tower.

Ye who, though 'tis nearly day,
On your hearts let sorrow prey,
Poor fools, repose and sleep are here,
And God cares for you,—do not fear.

Listen, listen to the hour!

Three strikes from the old church tower.

The morning twilight fades away;
Ye who dare to greet the day
Thank God, and fear not—all is well.
Now go to work, and so farewell.

A ROGUE'S LIFE.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS. CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

My first few days' experience in my new position satisfied me that Doctor Knapton preserved himself from betrayal by a system of surveillance worthy of the very worst days of the Holy Inquisition itself. No man of us ever knew that he was not being overlooked at home, or followed when he went out, by another man. Peep-holes were pierced in the wall of each room, and we were never certain, while at work, whose eye was observing, or whose ear was listening in secret. Though we all lived together, we were probably the least united body of men ever assembled under one roof. By way of effectually keeping up the want of union between us, we were not all trusted alike. I soon discovered that Old File and Young File were much further advanced in the doctor's confidence than Mill, Screw, or myself. There was a locked-up room, and a continually-closed door shutting off a back staircase, of both of which Old File and Young File possessed keys that were never so much as trusted in the possession of the rest of us. There was also a trapdoor in the floor of the principal work-room, the use of which was known to nobody but the doctor and his two privileged men. If we had not been all nearly on an equality in the matter of wages, these distinctions would have made bad blood among us. As it was, nobody having reason to complain of unjustly-diminished wages, nobody cared about any preferences in which profit was not involved.

The doctor must have gained a great deal of money by his skill as a coiner. His profits in business could never have averaged less than five hundred per cent.; and, to do him justice, he was really a generous as well as a rich master. Even I, as

a new hand, was, in fair proportion, as well paid by the week as the rest. We, of course, had nothing to do with the passing of false money—we only manufactured it (sometimes at the rate of four hundred pounds' worth in a week); and left its circulation to be managed by our customers in London and the large towns. Whatever we paid for in Barkingham was paid for in the genuine Mint coinage. I used often to compare my own true guineas, half-crowns and shillings with our imitations under the doctor's supervision, and was always amazed at the resemblance. Our scientific chief had discovered a process something like what is called electrotyping now-a-days, as I imagine. He was very proud of this; but he was prouder still of the ring of his metal, and with reason: it must have been a nice ear indeed that could discover the false tones in the doctor's coinage.

If I had been the most scrupulous man in the world, I must still have received my wages, for the very necessary purpose of not appearing to distinguish myself invidiously from my fellow-workmen. Upon the whole, I got on well with them. Old File and I struck up quite a friendship. Young File and Mill worked harmoniously with me; but Screw and I (as I had foreboded) quarrelled. This last man was not on good terms with his fellows, and had less of the doctor's confidence than any of the rest of us. Naturally not of a sweet temper, his isolated position in the house had soured him, and he rashly attempted to vent his ill-humour on me, as a new-comer. For some days I bore with him patiently; but at last he got the better of my powers of endurance; and I gave him a lesson in manners, one day, on the educational system of Gentleman Jones. He did not return the blow, or complain to the doctor; he only looked at me wickedly, and said: "I'll be even with you for that, some of these days." I soon forgot the words and the look.

With Old File, as I have said, I became quite friendly. Excepting the secrets of our prison-house, he was ready enough to talk on subjects about which I was curious. He had known the doctor as a young man, and was perfectly familiar with all the events of his career. From various conversations, at odds and ends of spare time, I discovered that our employer had begun life as a footman in a gentleman's family; that his young mistress had eloped with him, taking away with her every article of value that was her own personal property, in the shape of jewellery and dresses; that they had lived upon the sale of these things for some time; and that the husband, when the wife's means were exhausted, had turned strolling-player for a year or two. Abandoning that pursuit, he had next turned quack-doctor, first in a resident, then in a vagabond capacity—taking a medical degree of his own conferring, and

holding to it as a good travelling title for the rest of his life. From the selling of quack medicines he had proceeded to the adulterating of foreign wines, varied by lucrative evening occupation in the Paris gambling-houses. On returning to his native land, he still continued to turn his chemical knowledge to account, by giving his services to that particular branch of our commercial industry which is coarsely described as the adulteration of commodities; and from this he had gradually risen to the more refined pursuit of adulterating gold and silver—or, to use the common phrase again, making bad money. According to Old File's account, though he had never actually ill-used his wife, he had never lived on kind terms with her: the main cause of the estrangement between them being a suspicion on the doctor's part that Mrs. Knapton had kept some of her possessions in jewellery concealed from him, from the day of their marriage to the hour of her death. Whether this suspicion was well founded or not, and whether it had been transferred to the daughter after her mother's death, was more than my informant could tell. He seemed, to my astonishment and vexation, to know little or nothing about Laura's relations with her father. That she must long since have discovered him to be not quite so respectable a man as he looked, and that she might shrewdly suspect what was going on in the house at the present time, were, in Old File's opinion, matters of certainty; but that she knew anything positively on the subject of her father's actual occupations, he seemed to doubt. The doctor was not the sort of man to give his daughter, or any other woman, the slightest chance of ever surprising his secrets.

These particulars I gleaned during a month of servitude and imprisonment in the fatal red-brick house. During all that time not the slightest intimation reached me of Laura's whereabouts. Had she forgotten me? I could not believe it. Unless the dear brown eyes were the falsest hypocrites in the world, it was impossible that she should have forgotten me. Was she watched? Were all means of communicating with me, even in secret, carefully removed from her? I looked oftener and oftener into the doctor's study, as those questions occurred to me; but he never quitted it without locking the writing-desk first—he never left any papers scattered on the table, and he was never absent from the room at any special times and seasons that could be previously calculated upon. I began to despair, and to feel in my lonely moments a yearning to renew that childish experiment of crying, which I have already adverted to, in the way of confession. Moralists will be glad to hear that I really suffered acute mental misery at this time of my life. My state of depression would have gratified the most exacting of Methodists; and my penitent

face would have made my fortune if I could only have been exhibited by a reformatory association on the platform of Exeter Hall.

How much longer was this to last? Whither should I turn my steps when I regained my freedom? In what direction throughout all England should I begin seeking for Laura? Sleeping and waking—working and idling—those were now my constant thoughts. I did my best to prepare myself for every emergency that could happen; I tried to arm myself beforehand against every possible accident that could befall me. While I was still hard at work sharpening my faculties and disciplining my energies in this way, events occurred in the red-brick house which I had never anticipated; and an accident befel the doctor, on the possibility of which I had not dared to calculate, even in my most hopeful moments.

One morning I was engaged in the principal work-room with my employer. We were alone. Old File and his son were occupied in the garrets. Screw had been sent to Barkingham, accompanied, on the usual precautionary plan, by Mill. They had been gone nearly an hour when the doctor sent me into the next room to moisten and knead up some plaster of Paris. While I was engaged in this occupation, I suddenly heard strange voices in the large work-room. My curiosity was instantly excited. I went to the peep-hole in the wall, and looked through it.

I saw first my old enemy Screw, with his villanous face much paler than usual; next, two respectably-dressed strangers, whom he appeared to have brought into the room; and next to them Young File, addressing himself to the doctor.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said my friend, the workman-like footman; "but before these gentlemen say anything for themselves, I wish to explain, as they seem strangers to you, that I only let them in after I had heard them give the pass-word. My instructions are to let anybody in on our side of the door if they can give the pass-word. No offence, sir, but I want it to be understood that I have done my duty."

"Quite right, my man," said the doctor, in his blandest manner. "You may go back to your work."

Young File left the room, with a scrutinising look for the two strangers, and a suspicious frown for Screw.

"Allow us to introduce ourselves," began the elder of the two strangers.

"Pardon me for a moment," interposed the doctor. "Where is Mill?" he added, turning to Screw.

"Doing our errands at Barkingham," answered Screw, turning paler than ever.

"We happened to meet your two men, and to ask them the way to your house," said the stranger who had just spoken. "This man, with a caution that does him infinite credit, required to know our business before he told

us. We managed to introduce the pass-word—Happy-go-lucky—into our answer. This of course quieted suspicion; and he, at our request, guided us here, leaving his fellow-workman, as he has just told you, to do all errands at Barkingham."

While these words were being spoken, I saw Screw's eyes wandering discontentedly and amazedly round the room. He had left me in it with the doctor before he went out: was he disappointed at not finding me in it on his return?

While this thought was passing through my mind, the stranger resumed his explanations.

"We are here," he said, "as agents appointed to transact private business, out of London, for Mr. Manasseh, with whom you have dealings, I think?"

"Certainly," said the doctor, with a smile.

"And who owes you a little account, which we are appointed to settle."

"Just so!" remarked the doctor, pleasantly rubbing his hands one over the other. "My good friend, Mr. Manasseh, does not like to trust the post, I suppose? Very glad to make your acquaintance, gentlemen. Have you got the little memorandum about you?"

"Yes; but we think there is a slight inaccuracy in it. Have you any objection to let us refer to your ledger?"

"Not the least in the world. Screw, go down into my private laboratory, open the table-drawer nearest the window, and bring up a locked book, with a parchment cover, which you will find in it."

As Screw obeyed, I saw a look pass between him and the two strangers which made me begin to feel a little uneasy. I thought the doctor noticed it too; but he preserved his countenance, as usual, in a state of the most unruflled composure.

"What a time that fellow is gone!" he exclaimed, gaily. "Perhaps I had better go and get the book myself."

The two strangers had been gradually lessening the distance between the doctor and themselves, ever since Screw had left the room. The last words were barely out of his mouth, before they both sprang upon him, and pinioned his arms with their hands.

"Steady, my fine fellow," said Mr. Manasseh's head agent. "It's no go. We are Bow Street runners, and we've got you for coining."

"Not a doubt of it," said the doctor, with the most superb coolness. "You needn't hold me. I'm not fool enough to resist when I'm fairly caught."

"Wait till we've searched you; and then we'll talk about that," said the runner.

The doctor submitted to the searching with the patience of a martyr. No offensive weapon being found in his pockets, they allowed him to sit down unmolested in the nearest chair.

"Screw, I suppose?" said the doctor, looking inquiringly at the officers.

"Exactly," said the principal man of the two. "We have been secretly corresponding with him for weeks past. We have nabbed the man who went out with him, and got him safe at Barkingham. Don't expect Screw back with the ledger. As soon as he has made sure that the rest of you are in the house, he is to fetch another man or two of our Bow Street lot, who are waiting to come in till they hear from us. We only want an old man and a young one, and a third pal of yours who's a gentleman born, to make a regular clearance in the house. When we have once got you all, it will be the prettiest capture that's ever been made since I was in the force."

What the doctor answered to this I cannot say. Just as the officer had done speaking, I heard footsteps approaching the room in which I was listening. Was Screw looking for me? I instantly closed the peep-hole, and got behind the door. It opened back upon me, and, sure enough, Screw entered cautiously.

An empty old wardrobe stood opposite the door. Evidently suspecting that I might have taken the alarm and concealed myself inside it, he approached it on tip-toe. On tiptoe also I followed him; and, just as his hands were on the wardrobe door, my hands were on his throat. I had the disadvantage of being obliged to seize him from behind; but he was fortunately a little man, and no match for me. I easily and gently laid him on his back, in a voiceless and half-suffocated state—throwing myself right over him, to keep his legs quiet. When I saw his face getting black, and his small eyes growing largely globular, I let go with one hand, crammed my empty plaster of Paris bag, which lay close by, into his mouth, tied it fast, secured his hands and feet, and then left him perfectly harmless, while I took counsel with myself how best to secure my own safety.

I should have made my escape at once; but for what I heard the officer say about the men who were waiting to come in. Were they waiting near or at a distance? Were they on the watch at the front or the back of the house? I thought it highly desirable to give myself what chance there might be of ascertaining their whereabouts from the talk of the officers in the next room, before I risked the possibility of running right into their clutches. So I cautiously opened the peep-hole once more.

The doctor appeared to be still on the most friendly terms with his vigilant guardians from Bow Street.

"Have you any objection to my ringing for some lunch, before we are all taken off to London together?" I heard him ask in his most cheerful tones. "A glass of wine and a bit of bread and cheese won't do you any

harm, gentlemen, if you are as hungry as I am."

"If you want to eat and drink, order the victuals at once," replied one of the runners, sulkily. "We don't happen to want anything ourselves."

"Sorry for it," said the doctor. "I have some of the best old Madeira in England."

"Like enough," retorted the officer, sarcastically. "But you see we are not quite such fools as we look; and we have heard of such a thing, in our time, as houcussed wine."

"O fie! fie!" exclaimed the doctor, merrily. "Remember how well I am behaving myself, and don't wound my feelings by suspecting me of such shocking treachery as that!"

He moved to a corner of the room behind him, and touched a nob in the wall which I had never before observed. A bell rang directly, which had a new tone in it to my ears.

"Too bad," said the doctor, turning round again to the runners; "really too bad, gentlemen, to suspect me of that!"

Shaking his head deprecatingly, he moved back to the corner, pulled aside something in the wall, disclosed the mouth of a pipe which I had never seen before, and called down it:—

"Moses!"

It was the first time I had heard that name in the house.

"Who is Moses?" inquired the officers both together, advancing on him suspiciously.

"Only my servant," answered the doctor. He turned once more to the pipe, and called down it:—

"Bring up the Stilton Cheese, and a bottle of the Old Madeira."

The cheese we had in cut at that time was of purely Dutch extraction. I remembered Port, Sherry, and Claret, in my palmy dinner-days at the doctor's family table; but certainly not Old Madeira. Perhaps he selfishly kept his best wine and his choicest cheese for his own consumption.

"Sam," said one of the runners to the other, "you look to our civil friend here, and I'll grab Moses when he brings up the lunch."

"Would you like to see what the operation of coining is, while my man is getting the lunch ready?" said the doctor. "It may be of use to me at the trial, if you can testify that I afforded you every facility for finding out anything you might want to know. Only you mention my polite anxiety to make things easy and instructive from the very first, and I may get recommended to mercy. See here—this queer-looking machine, gentlemen (from which two of my men derive their nick-names), is what we call a Mill-and-Screw."

He began to explain the machine with the manner and tone of a lecturer at a scientific institution. In spite of themselves, the officers

burst out laughing. I looked round at Screw as the doctor got deeper into his explanations. The traitor was rolling his wicked eyes horribly at me. They presented so shocking a sight, that I looked away again. What was I to do next? The minutes were getting on, and I had not heard a word yet, through the peep-hole, on the subject of the reserve of Bow Street runners outside. Would it not be best to risk everything, and get away at once by the back of the house?

Just as I had resolved on venturing the worst, and making my escape forthwith, I heard the officers interrupt the doctor's lecture.

"Your lunch is a long time coming," said one of them.

"Moses is lazy," answered the doctor; "and the Madeira is in a remote part of the cellar. Shall I ring again?"

"Hang your ringing again!" growled the runner impatiently. "I don't understand why our reserve men are not here yet. Suppose you go and give them a whistle, Sam."

"I don't half like leaving you," returned Sam. "This learned gentleman here is rather a shifty sort of a chap; and it strikes me that two of us isn't a bit too much to watch him."

"What's that?" exclaimed Sam's comrade, suspiciously.

A crash of broken crockery in the lower part of the house had followed the last word of the cautious officer's speech. Naturally, I could draw no special inference from the sound; but, for all that, it filled me with a breathless interest and suspicion, which held me irresistibly at the peep-hole, though the moment before I had made up my mind to fly from the house.

"Moses is awkward as well as lazy," said the doctor. "He has dropped the tray! O, dear, dear me! he has certainly dropped the tray."

"Let's take our learned friend down-stairs between us," suggested Sam. "I shan't be easy till we've got him out of the house."

"And I shan't be easy if we don't handcuff him before we leave the room," returned the other.

"Rude conduct, gentlemen—after all that has passed, remarkably rude conduct," said the doctor. "May I, at least, get my hat while my hands are at liberty? It hangs on that peg opposite to us." He moved towards it a few steps into the middle of the room while he spoke.

"Stop!" said Sam; "I'll get your hat for you. We'll see if there's anything inside it or not, before you put it on."

The doctor stood stock-still, like a soldier at the word, Halt.

"And I'll get the handcuffs," said the other runner, searching his coat pockets.

The doctor bowed to him assentingly and forgivingly.

"Only oblige me with my hat, and I shall be quite ready for you," he said—paused for one moment, then repeated the words, "Quite Ready," in a louder tone; and then instantly disappeared through the floor!

I saw the two officers rush from opposite ends of the room to a great opening in the middle of it. The trap-door on which the doctor had been standing, and on which he had descended, closed up with a bang at the same moment; and a friendly voice from the lower regions called out gaily, "Good-bye!"

The officers next made for the door of the room. It had been locked from the other side. As they tore furiously at the handle, the roll of the wheels of the doctor's gig sounded on the drive in front of the house; and the friendly voice called out once more, "Good-bye!"

I waited just long enough to see the baffled officers unbarring the window-shutters for the purpose of giving the alarm, before I closed the peep-hole, and with a farewell look at the distorted face of my prostrate enemy, Screw, left the room.

The doctor's study-door was open as I passed it on my way down-stairs. The locked writing-desk, which probably contained the only clue to Laura's retreat that I was likely to find, was in its usual place on the table. There was no time to break it open on the spot. I rolled it up in my apron, took it off bodily under my arm, and descended to the iron door on the staircase. Just as I was within sight of it, it was opened from the landing on the other side. I turned to run up-stairs again, when a familiar voice, cried, "Stop!" and looking round, I beheld Young File.

"All right!" he said. "Father's off with the governor in the gig, and the runners in hiding outside are in full cry after them. If Bow Street can get within pistol-shot of the blood mare, all I can say is, I give Bow Street full leave to fire away with both barrels! Where's Screw?"

"Gagged by me in the casting-room."

"Well done, you! Got all your things, I see, under your arm? Wait two seconds while I grab my money. Never mind the rumpus up-stairs,—there's nobody outside to help them; and the gate's locked, if there was."

He darted past me up the stairs. I could hear the imprisoned officers shouting for help from the top windows. Their reserve men must have been far away, by this time, in pursuit of the gig; and there was not much chance of their getting useful help from any stray countryman who might be passing along the road, except in the way of sending a message to Barkingham. Anyhow we were sure of a half-hour to escape in, at the very least.

"Now then," said Young File, rejoicing me; "Let's be off by the back way through

the plantation. How came you to lay your lucky hands on Screw?" he continued, when we had passed through the iron door, and had closed it after us.

"Tell me first, how the doctor managed to make a hole in the floor just in the nick of time."

"What! did you see the trap sprung?"

"I saw everything through the hole in the wall."

"The devil you did! Had you any notion that signals were going on, all the while you were on the watch? We have a regular set of them in case of accidents. It's a rule that father, and me, and the doctor are never to be in the workroom together—so as to keep one of us always at liberty to act on the signals.—Where are you going to?"

"Only to get the gardener's ladder, to help us over the wall. Go on."

"The first signal is a private bell—that means, *Listen at the pipe*. The next is a call down the pipe for 'Moses,'—that means, *Danger! Lock the door*. 'Stilton Cheese,' means, *Put the mare to*; and 'Old Madeira,' *Stand by the trap*. The trap works in that locked up room you never got into; and when our hands are on the machinery, we are awkward enough to have a little accident with the luncheon tray. 'Quite Ready,' is the signal to lower the trap, which we do in the regular theatre-fashion. We lowered the doctor smartly enough, as you saw, and got out by the back staircase. Father went in the gig, and I let them out and locked the gates after them. Now you know as much as I've got breath to tell you."

We scaled the wall easily by the help of the ladder. When we were down on the other side, Young File suggested that the safest course for us was to separate, and for each to take his own way. We shook hands and parted. He went Southward, towards London, and I went Westward, towards the sea-coast, with Dr. Knapton's precious writing-desk safe under my arm.

For a couple of hours I walked on briskly, careless in what direction I went, so long as I kept my back turned on Barkingham. By the time I had put ten miles of ground, according to my calculations, between me and the red brick house, I began to look upon the doctor's writing-desk rather in the light of an incumbrance, and determined to examine it without further delay. Accordingly I picked up the first large stone I could find in the road, crossed a common, burst through a hedge, and came to a halt, on the other side, in a thick plantation. Here, finding myself well screened from public view, I broke open the desk with the help of the stone, and began to look over the contents.

To my unspeakable disappointment I found but few papers of any kind to examine. The desk was beautifully fitted with all the neces-

sary materials for keeping up a large correspondence; but there were not more than half a dozen letters in it altogether. Four were on business-matters, and the other two were of a friendly nature, referring to persons and things in which I did not feel the smallest interest. I found besides half a dozen bills receipted (the doctor was a mirror of punctuality in the payment of tradesmen), note and letter-paper of the finest quality, clarified pens, a pretty little pin-cushion, two small account-books filled with the neatest entries, and some leaves of blotting-paper. Nothing else; absolutely nothing else, in the treacherous writing-desk on which I had implicitly relied to guide me to Laura's hiding-place.

I groaned in sheer wretchedness over the destruction of all my dearest plans and hopes. If the Bow Street runners had come into the plantation just as I had completed the rifling of the desk, I think I should have let them take me without making the slightest effort at escape. As it was, no living soul appeared within sight of me. I must have sat at the foot of a tree for full half an hour, with the doctor's useless bills and letters before me, with my head in my hands, and with all my energies of body and mind utterly crushed down by despair. At the end of the half-hour, the natural restlessness of my faculties began to make itself felt. Whatever may be said about it in books, no emotion in this world ever did, or ever will, last for long together. The strong feeling may return over and over again; but it must have its constant intervals of change or repose. In real life the bitterest grief doggedly takes its rest and dries its eyes; the heaviest despair sinks to a certain level, and stops there to give hope a chance of rising, in spite of us. Even the joy of an unexpected meeting is always an imperfect sensation, for it never lasts long enough to justify our secret anticipations—our happiness dwindles to mere every-day contentment before we have half done with it.

I raised my head, and gathered the bills and letters together, and stood up a man again, wondering at the variableness of my own temper, at the curious elasticity of that toughest of all the vital substances within us, which we call Hope. "Sitting and sighing at the foot of this tree," thought I, "is not the way to find Laura, or to secure my own safety. Let me circulate my blood and rouse my ingenuity, by taking to the road again." However, before I forced my way back to the open side of the hedge, I thought it desirable to tear up the bills and letters, for fear of being traced by them if they were found in the plantation. The desk I left where it was, there being no name on it. The note-paper and pens I pocketed—forlorn as my situation was, it did not authorise me to waste stationery. The blotting-paper was the last thing left to dispose of: two neatly-folded sheets, quite clean, except in one place,

where the impression of a few lines of writing appeared. I was about to put the blotting-paper into my pocket after the pens, when something in the look of the writing impressed on it, stopped me.

Four blurred lines of not more, apparently, than two or three words each, running out one beyond another regularly from left to right. Had the doctor been composing poetry and blotting it in a violent hurry? At a first glance, that was more than I could tell. The order of the written letters, whatever they might be, was reversed on the face of the impression taken of them by the blotting-paper. I turned to the other side of the leaf. The order of the letters was now right, but the letters themselves were sometimes too faintly impressed, sometimes too much blurred together to be legible. I held the leaf up to the light, and there was a complete change: the blurred letters grew clearer; the invisible connecting lines appeared—I could read the words, from first to last.

The writing must have been hurried, and it had to all appearance been hurriedly dried towards the corner of a perfectly clean leaf of the blotting-paper. After twice reading, I felt sure that I had made out correctly the following address:

Miss James,
2, Zion Place,
Crickgelly,
N. Wales.

It was hard, under the circumstances, to form an opinion, as to the handwriting; but I thought I could recognise the character of some of the doctor's letters, even in the blotted impression of them. Supposing I was right, who was Miss James?

Some Welsh friend of the doctor's, unknown to me? Probably enough. But why not Laura herself under an assumed name? Having sent her from home to keep her out of my way, it seemed next to a certainty that her father would take all possible measures to prevent my tracing her, and would, therefore, as a common act of precaution, forbid her to travel under her own name. Crickgelly, North Wales, was assuredly a very remote place to banish her to; but then the doctor was not a man to do things by halves: he knew the lengths to which my cunning and resolution were capable of carrying me; and he would have been innocent indeed if he had hidden his daughter from me in any place within reasonable distance of Barkingham. Last, and not least important, Miss James sounded in my ears exactly like an assumed name. Was there ever any woman absolutely and literally named Miss James? However I may have altered my opinion on this point since, my mind was not in a condition at that time to admit the possible existence of any such individual as a maiden James. Before, therefore, I had put the precious blotting-paper

into my pocket, I had satisfied myself that my first duty, under all the circumstances, was to shape my flight immediately to Crickgelly. I could be certain of nothing—not even of identifying the doctor's handwriting by the impression on the blotting-paper. But provided I kept clear of Barkingham, it was all the same to me what part of the United Kingdom I went to; and, in the absence of any actual clue to Laura's place of residence, there was consolation and encouragement even in following an imaginary trace. My spirits rose to their natural height as I struck into the high road again, and beheld across the level plain the smoke, chimneys, and church-spires of a large manufacturing town. There I saw the welcome promise of a coach—the happy chance of making my journey to Crickgelly easy and rapid from the very outset.

On my way to the town, I was reminded by the staring of all the people I passed on the road, of one important consideration which I had hitherto most unaccountably overlooked—the necessity of making some radical change in my personal appearance. I had no cause to dread the Bow Street runners, for not one of them had seen me; but I had the strongest possible reasons for distrusting a meeting with my enemy Screw. He would certainly be made use of by the officers for the purpose of identifying the companions whom he had betrayed; and I had the best reasons in the world to believe that he would rather assist in the taking of me than in the capture of all the rest of the coining gang put together—the doctor himself not excepted. My present costume was of the dandy sort—rather shabby, but gay in colour and outrageous in cut. I had not altered it for an artisan's suit in the doctor's house, because I never had any intention of staying there a day longer than I could possibly help. The apron in which I had wrapped the writing-desk was the only approach I had made towards wearing the honourable uniform of the working man. Would it be wise now to make my transformation complete, by adding to the apron a velvet jacket and a seal-skin cap? No: my hands were too white, my manners too inveterately gentlemanlike, for an artisan disguise. It would be safer to assume a serious character—to shave off my whiskers, crop my hair, buy a modest hat and umbrella, and dress entirely in black. At the first sloop-shop I encountered in the suburbs of the town, I got a carpet-bag and a clerical-looking suit. At the first easy shaving-shop I passed, I had my hair cropped and my whiskers taken off. After that, I retreated again to the country—walked back till I found a convenient hedge down a lane off the high road, changed my upper garments behind it, and emerged, bashful, black, and reverend, with my cotton umbrella tucked modestly under my arm,

my eyes on the ground, my head in the air, and my hat off my forehead. When I found two labourers touching their caps to me on my way back to the town, I knew that it was all right, and that I might now set the vindictive eyes of Screw himself safely at defiance.

I had not the most distant notion where I was when I reached the High Street, and stopped at The Green Bull Hotel and Coach-office. However, I managed to mention my modest wishes to be conveyed at once in the direction of Wales, with no more than a becoming confusion of manner. The answer was not so encouraging as I could have wished. The coach to Shrewsbury had left an hour before, and there would be no other public conveyance running in my direction until the next morning. Finding myself thus obliged to yield to adverse circumstances, I submitted resignedly, and booked a place outside by the next day's coach, in the name of the Reverend John Jones. I thought it desirable to be at once unassuming and Welch in the selection of a travelling name; and therefore considered John Jones calculated to fit me, in my present emergency, to a hair.

After securing a bed at the hotel, and ordering a frugal curate's dinner (bit of fish, two chops, mashed potatoes, semolina pudding, half-pint of sherry), I sallied out to look at the town. Not knowing the name of it, and not daring to excite surprise by asking, I found the place full of vague yet mysterious interest. Here I was, somewhere in Central England, just as ignorant of localities as if I had been suddenly deposited in Central Africa; my lively fancy revelled in the new sensation. I invented a name for the town, a code of laws for the inhabitants, productions, antiquities, chalybeate springs, population, statistics of crime, and so on, while I walked about the streets, looked in at the shop-windows, and attentively examined the Market-place and Town-hall. Experienced travellers, who have exhausted all novelties, would do well to follow my example; they may be certain, for one day at least, of getting some fresh ideas, and feeling a new sensation.

On returning to dinner in the coffee-room, I found all the London papers on the table.

The Morning Post happened to lie uppermost, so I took it away to my own seat to occupy the time, while my unpretending bit of fish was frying. Glancing lazily at the advertisements on the first page, to begin with, I was astounded by the appearance of the following lines, at the top of a column:

"IF—K S—FTL—Y will communicate with his distressed and alarmed relatives Mr. and Mrs. B—TT—RB—RY, he will hear of something to his advantage, and may be assured that all will be once more forgiven. A—B—LLA entreats him to write."

What, in the name of all that is most mys-

terious, does this mean! was my first thought after reading the advertisement. Can Lady Malkinshaw have taken a fresh lease of that impregnable vital tenement at the door of which Death has been knocking vainly for so many years past? (Nothing more likely.) Was my felonious connection with Doctor Knapton suspected? (It seemed improbable.) One thing, however, was certain: I was missed, and the Batterburys were naturally anxious about me—anxious enough to advertise in the public papers. I debated with myself whether I should answer their pathetic appeal or not. I had all my money about me (having never let it out of my own possession during my stay in the red-brick house); and there was plenty of it for the present; so I thought it best to leave the alarm and distress of my anxious relatives unrelieved for a little while longer, and to return quietly to the perusal of the Morning Post.

Five minutes of desultory reading brought me unexpectedly to an explanation of the advertisement, in the shape of the following paragraph:

"ALARMING ILLNESS OF LADY MALKINSHAW.—

We regret to announce that this venerable lady was seized with an alarming illness on Saturday last, at her mansion in town. The attack took the character of a fit—of what precise nature we have not been able to learn. Her ladyship's medical attendant and near relative, Doctor Softly, was immediately called in, and predicted the most fatal results. Fresh medical attendance was secured, and her ladyship's nearest surviving relatives, Mrs. Softly, and Mr. and Mrs. Batterbury, of Duskydale Park, were summoned. At the time of their arrival, her ladyship's condition was comatose, her breathing being highly stertorous. If we are rightly informed, Doctor Softly and the other medical gentlemen present, gave it as their opinion that if the pulse of the venerable sufferer did not rally in the course of a quarter-of-an-hour at most, very lamentable results might be anticipated. For fourteen minutes, as our reporter was informed, no change took place; but, strange to relate, immediately afterwards her ladyship's pulse rallied suddenly in the most extraordinary manner. She was observed to open her eyes very wide, and was heard, to the surprise and delight of all surrounding the couch, to ask why her ladyship's usual lunch of chicken-broth with a glass of Amontillado sherry was not placed on the table as usual. These refreshments having been produced, under the sanction of the medical gentlemen, the aged patient partook of them with an appearance of the utmost relish. Since this happy alteration for the better, her ladyship's health has, we rejoice to say, rapidly improved; and the answer now given to all friendly and fashionable inquirers is, in the venerable lady's own humorous phraseology, 'Much better than could be expected.'"

Well done, my excellent grandmother! my firm, my unwearied, my undying friend! Never can I say that my case is desperate while you can swallow your chicken-broth and sip your Amontillado sherry. The moment I want money, I will write to Mr. Batterbury, and cut another little golden

slice out of that possible three-thousand-pound-cake, for which he has already suffered and sacrificed so much. In the mean time, O venerable protectress of the wandering Rogue! let me gratefully drink your health in the nastiest and smallest half-pint of sherry this palate ever tasted, or these eyes ever beheld!

I went to bed that night in great spirits. My luck seemed to be returning to me; and I began to feel more than hopeful of really discovering my beloved Laura at Crickgelly, under the alias of Miss James. The next morning the Rev. John Jones descended to breakfast, so rosy, bland, and smiling, that the chambermaids simpered as he tripped by them in the passage, and the landlady bowed graciously as he passed her parlour door. The coach drove up, and the reverend gentleman (after waiting characteristically for the woman's ladder) mounted to his place on the roof, behind the coachman. One man sat there who had got up before him—and who should that man be, but the chief of the Bow Street runners, who had rashly tried to take Dr. Knapton into custody!

There could not be the least doubt of his identity; I should have known his face again among a hundred. He looked at me as I took my place by his side, with one sharp searching glance—then turned his head away towards the road. Knowing that he had never set eyes on my face (thanks to the convenient peep-hole at the red-brick house), I thought my meeting with him was likely to be rather advantageous than otherwise. I had now an opportunity of watching the proceedings of one of our pursuers, at any rate,—and surely this was something gained.

"Fine morning, sir," I said, politely.

"Yes," he replied, in the gruffest of monosyllables.

I was not offended: I could make allowance for the feelings of a man who had been locked up by his own prisoner.

"Very fine morning, indeed," I repeated, soothingly and cheerfully.

The runner only grunted this time. Well, well! we all have our little infirmities. I don't think the worse of the man now, for having been rude to me, that morning, on the top of the Shrewsbury coach.

The next passenger who got up and placed himself by my side was a florid, excitable, confused-looking gentleman, excessively talkative and familiar. He was followed by a sulky agricultural youth in top-boots,—and then, the complement of passengers on our seat behind the coachmen was complete.

"Heard the news, sir?" said the florid man, turning to me.

"Not that I am aware of," I answered.

"It's the most tremendous thing that has happened these fifty years," said the florid man. "A gang of coiners, sir, discovered at Barkingham—in a house they used to call the Grange. All the dreadful lot of bad

silver that's been about, they're at the bottom of. And the head of the gang not taken!—escaped, sir, like a ghost on the stage, through a trap-door, after actually locking the runners into his workshop. The blacksmiths from Barkingham had to break them out; the whole house was found full of iron doors, back staircases, and all that sort of thing, just like the Inquisition. A most respectable man, the original proprietor! Think what a misfortune to have let his house to a scoundrel who has turned the whole inside into traps, furnaces, and iron doors. The fellow's reference, sir, was actually at a London bank, where he kept a first-rate account. What is to become of society? where is our protection? Where are our characters, when we are left at the mercy of scoundrels? The times are awful—upon my soul, the times we live in are perfectly awful!"

"Pray, sir, is there any chance of catching this coiner?" I inquired, innocently.

"I hope so, sir; for the sake of outraged society, I hope so," said the excitable man. "They've printed handbills at Barkingham, offering a reward for taking him. I was with my friend the mayor, early this morning, and saw them issued. 'Mr. Mayor,' says I, 'I'm going West,—give me a few copies—let me help to circulate them—for the sake of outraged society, let me help to circulate them.' Here they are,—take a few, sir, for distribution. You'll see there are three other fellows to be caught besides the principal rascal—one of them a scamp belonging to a respectable family. O! what times! Take three copies, and pray circulate them in three influential quarters. Perhaps that gentleman next you would like a few. Will you take three, sir?"

"No, I won't," said the Bow Street runner, doggedly. "Nor yet one of 'em;—and it's my opinion that the coining-gang would be nabbed all the sooner, if you was to give over helping the law to catch them."

This answer produced a vehement expostulation from my excitable neighbour, to which I paid little attention, being better engaged in reading the handbill. It described the doctor's personal appearance with remarkable accuracy, and cautioned persons in seaport towns to be on the look-out for him. Old File, Young File, and myself were all dishonourably mentioned together in a second paragraph, as runaways of inferior importance. Not a word was said in the hand-bill to show that the authorities at Barkingham even so much as suspected the direction in which any one of us had escaped. This would have been very encouraging, but for the presence of the runner by my side, which looked as if Bow Street had its suspicions, however innocent Barkingham might be. Could the doctor have directed his flight towards Crickgelly? I trembled internally, as the question suggested itself to me. Surely he would prefer

writing to Miss James to join him when he got to a safe place of refuge, rather than encumber himself with the young lady before he was well out of reach of the far-stretching arm of the law. This seemed infinitely the most natural course of conduct. Still, there was the runner travelling towards Wales—and not certainly without a special motive. I put the handbills in my pocket, and listened for any hints which might creep out in his talk; but he perversely kept silent. The more my excitable neighbour tried to dispute with him, the more contemptuously he refused to talk. I began to feel vehemently impatient for our arrival at Shrewsbury; for there only could I hope to discover something more of my formidable fellow-traveller's plans.

The coach stopped for dinner; and some of our passengers left us, the excitable man with the handbills among the number. I got down, and stood on the doorstep of the inn, pretending to be looking about me, but in reality watching the movements of the runner. Rather to my surprise, I saw him go to the door of the coach, and speak to one of the inside passengers. After a short conversation, of which I could not hear one word, the runner left the coach door and entered the inn, called for a glass of brandy and water, and took it out to his friend, who had not left the vehicle. The friend bent forward to receive it at the window. I caught a glimpse of his face, and felt my knees tremble under me—it was Screw himself!

Screw, pale and haggard-looking, evidently not yet recovered from the effect of my grip on his throat! Screw, in attendance on the runner, travelling inside the coach in the character of an invalid. He must be going this journey to help the Bow Street officers to identify some one of our scattered gang of whom they were in pursuit. It could not be the doctor—the runner could discover him without assistance from anybody. Why might it not be me?

I began to think whether it would be best to trust boldly in my disguise, and my lucky position outside the coach, or whether I should abandon my fellow passengers immediately. It was not easy to settle at once which course was the safest—so I tried the effect of looking at my two alternatives from another point of view. Should I risk everything, and go on resolutely to Crickgelly, on the chance of discovering that Laura and Miss James were one and the same person—or should I give up on the spot the only prospect of finding my lost mistress, and direct my attention entirely to the business of looking after my own safety? As this latter alternative practically resolved itself into the simple question of whether I should act like a man who was in love, or like a man who was not, my natural instincts settled the difficulty in no time. I boldly imitated the example of my fellow-passengers, and

went in to dinner, determined to go on afterwards to Crickgelly, though all Bow Street should be following at my heels.

WAITER!

WHEN did it first occur to him to be a waiter? Was it ambition, accident, an adverse fate that made him one? Was he born a waiter, or did he achieve waiterhood, or was it thrust upon him? "Who first seduced him to the foul revolt?" Did he, straying one day, a child, into the great room of the London Tavern, and seeing the tables laid for a public dinner, fold his little arms and cry: "And I, too, am a waiter!" even as the Italian exclaimed: "Ed anch'è io son pittore!" How the deuce did he come to be a waiter?

John never brings me a tooth-pick; Thomas never whispers to me (with as much secrecy and grave mystery as if he were communicating the last on dit about the Paris Conference), the degree of cut—prime, or rather low, which the veal or pork is in; Alphonse never asks me with a suavity—worthy of the ancien régime—whether I will take cream to my coffee; William never cries, "Yessr!"—Charles, "Coming;" James never shrieks down the speaking-tube that communicates with the kitchen, without a flood of queries pouring in upon me. I am naturally inquisitive, and the waiter is to me such a mystery that I always feel inclined to ask him to sit down opposite to me, when I have paid my reckoning, and talk to me. I should like to draw the waiter out, to learn his past history—to know his secrets, if he has any,—to gather his statistics—to know what he thinks of me, and of the other customers. But how can I do this, and what time has the waiter to converse with me, when the old gentleman in the next box is clamouring for his whiskey, and the red-headed man in the Gordon plaid has called for a welsh rabbit in so loud a tone that his next move seems not unlike to be that of rushing to my table and dragging the waiter away from me by the hair of his head?

A chapter might be written upon the impatient men who are irascible and hard upon waiters. I like to be gentle with them. If they do not bring what I want on the instant, they are at least books to me which I can read and meditate upon; and the only punishment I ever inflict on a neglectful or uncivil waiter is to ask him for a cigar-light, make him a low bow, and showing him twopence, inform him that I intend to present it to the waiter at the Hen and Chickens Hotel at Birmingham, whither I am bound by the night mail, instead of to him. He feels this severely. He would, were he malicious, unwait upon me; but he can't; my dinner is gone and past; so all he can do is to overcharge the next customer, which is no business of mine, or to retire to his pantry and repent, which is better. But I know men,—

I am sure they are tyrants at home—bully their servants, pester their wives and beat their children—who seem to take a delight in harassing, badgering, objugating the waiter: setting pitfalls in the reckoning that he may stumble, and giving him confused orders that he may trip himself up. These are the men who call in the landlords, and demand the waiter's instant dismissal because their mutton-chop has a curly tail; these are the pleasant fellows who threaten to write to the *Times*, because the cayenne pepper won't come out of the caster. These are the jocund companions who quarrel with the cabmen, and menace them with ruin and the treadmill. I never had a fracas with a cabman in my life; and once, when the driver of a dashing *Hansom* told me confidently that the fare from the *White Horse Cellar* to *Kensington Turnpike* would be four shillings, I poked him in the ribs, telling him he was a droll fellow; whereupon he, seeing the humour of the thing, drove me cheerily to the palace-gates for a shilling.

The association of cabmen and waiters suggests to me a question over which I have long pondered. What do they say of their fares and their customers after they are departed. Do they talk about them at all? I think they do. A philosopher whom I knew, found out, after much research, a cabaret in Paris which was the special resort of the cab-drivers after their hours of labour. He was of the incredulous, and thought the men with the glazed hats and the red waistcoats would confine themselves to discourse upon the hardness of the times, the smallness of the fares, the badness of the roads, the capacity of their horses, or the dearth of oats; or, at most, that over the alcoholic results of their *pourboires* they would discuss literature, the drama, politics, or the sharemarket. But he was agreeably disappointed. The conversation ran almost entirely upon the persons they had driven during the day. Chip bonnets and green mantles trimmed with fur, were commented upon; the stout man with the five heavy bundles tied up in silk handkerchiefs, and which jingled as he took them out of the cab, was reckoned up; bets were laid about the *sallow* man with the blue-black beard, whose left wrist was bound up in linen, whose face was covered with scratches, who hired the cab at the top of the *Rue du Temple*, and was set down at the *Havre Railway-station*; stopping the vehicle five times during the journey, as if to alight, and changing his mind each time. Heads were shaken gravely when a red-nosed driver told of how, inspecting the interior of his cab after the *sallow* man's departure, he had found three cigars, of which a finger's-breadth had scarcely been smoked, but which were all pulled and gnawed to pieces; and how on the window-strap he had discovered five deep, dull, brownish-red marks like those of fingers.

Histories were woven and strung together from fragments of letters, and broken flowers that had been left on the cushion, by veiled ladies; from old men with eyes red as with weeping; from boys who had told the cabman to drive anywhere for three hours, and had paid him thrice his fare; from destinations countermanded, and orders to drive slowly, and blinds that had been drawn down, and check-strings broken. What but this: love, crime, sorrow, felicity, were eliminated from the seemingly uninteresting proceedings of persons the driver had scarcely seen, and who had jumped in and out of his carriage, paid their one franc ten, or seventy-five centimes, and gone on their way, never to be seen again by him in this world.

When the spoons are to be counted, the gratuity-halfpence reckoned, the napkins verified, and the check-balance struck at night; when the gas is turned down, and the legs of the mahogany tables turned up, like those of lazy dogs; when the tired-cook emerges from the lower regions, and, wiping her hot face, essays to forget that such things as chop and 'tater or steak well done can be; when the last customer has vanished, and the waiters have their suppers (I would give something to see a waiter sup), then you may be sure the tide of conversation turns on the customers of the past day. Then you and I and all the world of customers are brought before the *vehmgericht* of the *Saladin's Coffee-house*. Then our liberality and our meanness, our habit of choking over our soup, and method of brewing our punch, the handles of our umbrellas, the cut of our *paletôts*, are all weighed, and noted, and commented upon. Moles, and bats, and deaf adders that we are, we imagine that yonder man in the white neckcloth has neither eyes to see nor ears to hear, and that he is content to bring us our dinners and take our twopences without further question. Why, he knows all about us. We sit in a box and talk, as though we were in a padded chamber; but there is an ear of *Dionysius* by every coffee-room bell. The waiter is aware of us. How we went into the *City* to-day, and couldn't meet that party who is to cash the little bill; how we don't mind telling *Tom*, in the strictest confidence, that *Jack* is an infernal scoundrel; how we are madly in love with *Emily*; how we like coming to the *Saladin Coffee-house*, because that ruffianly *Mopus* never comes there (*Mopus* dines at the *Saladin* every day); how the waiter has not the slightest idea whom we are. Moles and bats! the waiter often knows our tailors, our washerwomen, and the exact amount of our incomes. He knows, when a customer tells him that he has left his purse at home, and that he will settle that little matter next time, how far the customer is trustworthy. Men who pass the major portions

of their lives in spying into other men's affairs, think stupidly that their own actions are quite concealed and secret, and that the rest of the world is indifferent to them. Error. Our most secret doings, nay, what we imagine to be our inmost thoughts, are often the open talk and jeer of hundreds of people with whom we have never interchanged a word. That more people know Tom Fool than Tom Fool knows, is, though at once a truism and a vulgarism, a profound and philosophic axiom. Despise not the waiter, for he may know you thoroughly. Be careful what you do or say, for there are hundreds of machicolated crevices in every dead wall, whence spyglasses are pointed at you; and the sky above is darkened with little birds, eager to carry matters concerning you. Dio ti vede (God sees thee) they write on the walls in Italy. A man's own heart should tell him this; but his common sense should tell him likewise that men are also always regarding him; that the streets are full of eyes, the walls of ears. I should like some self-sufficient cheap dandy to know how contemptible and ridiculous he is to hundreds whom he thinks admire him; how the secret of his jewellery is revealed and scoffed at, and his second-hand clothes are appraised, and his carefully-concealed garret is notorious. I should like some self-righteous Pharisee to know how transparent and loathsome his hypocrisy is, how his oleaginous smile deceives no one, how his secret cozenings, his occult vices are divulged and bruited about, how men shrink from the pressure of his fat clammy hand. Should I like everybody to know how much that is bad and mean and vile and contemptible the rest of the world know about them, how poorly they talk and think of their fellows? No, it would be intolerable. Psha! never mind what people say of you; or rather, take you care that you give them no cause to speak ill of you. Then, if they persist in calumny, laugh, or go bravely out and give them all the lie.

Being myself (or endeavouring, I dare say wrongfully, to persuade myself that I am) of the same way of thinking as that jovial miller who had his residence on the banks of the River Dee—caring not much for anybody, and attributing a similar feeling towards myself to the majority of my acquaintances—the personal opinion of the waiter does not distress me much; and I am enabled to concentrate all my inquisitive faculties upon him. Yet I am at once at issue with the jolly miller, for I care a great deal for the waiter. I want to know so much about him. Why his name in England is never Christopher, Francis (the last waiter by that name dates from Henry the Fourth's time), Frederick, or Eugene; and why, in France, he should never be John or Thomas, but Alphonse, Antoine, Auguste? An English waiting Anthony or Augustus would be unbearable. How about

the waiter's home, too,—how about his wife, his children? Do they wear white neck-cloths, and carry napkins over their arms? Do they ever play at waiters? I know the undertaker's children play at funerals; the entire nation of French children play at soldiers; I have seen children play at ships, at school; I have been told, though I do not credit it, that brokers' children play at dis-training for rent; but do the infant Johns and Charleses play at Yes'r, and Coming? Do they imitate in their baby manner the footstep swift but stealthy?—the waiters' wonderful lingering about a table, as if something were wanted when nothing is wanted, and which prompts you at last to order in desperation something you do not want? the whisking away of crumbs, the mystic rubbing of the hands, the sudden appearance, as if from a stage shooting-trap, in unexpected places? the banalities of waitorial conversation about the weather; the long time that has elapsed since he has had the pleasure of seeing you; and the gentleman in the left-hand corner box, who drank three bottles of port every night, regular, for thirty years, always gave the waiter ninenpence when he went away; and, dying worth a mint of money, left it to a "horsespittle."

But a graver question is evoked by this. Is waiting an art and mystery? Have young waiters to serve an apprenticeship to it, as to other crafts, or is it self-taught, spontaneously acquired? I incline to the latter solution. A young waiter—a boy waiter, I mean—is simply a young bear that no amount of licking will bring into shape. I can recal now a horrible eidolon of a young cub of a boy waiter who officiated in a Westmoreland inn. I shall never forget his atrocious red head, his mottled face (something like the tablets of compressed vegetable soup), his flapping ears, the huge encircling collar that made his head look like an ugly bowpot, the fixed grin, half-idiotic half-sardonic, that distorted his gashed mouth. He was a very Briareus of left hands; he stamped on your corns in handing you the salt; he spilt gravy over your linen; he never came when he was wanted; he knew nothing, neither the day of the month, nor the name of the next house, nor the time for the train to start. He fought with the boots, and had his ears boxed by the cook, and whenever you entered your bedroom you were sure to find him there, contemplating your portmanteau or your dressing-case with the same horrible grin. I have met scores of these oaves, mis-called waiters, in my travels. A little girl, now, can wait with exquisite neatness and dexterity. She grows up at last into neat-handed Phillis, with the smile, the ringlets, and the ribbons, who waits on you in pleasant country-town inns; but of the young waiter my fixed impression is that he grows up a young carter, or a young navi-

gator, or a young hippopotamus—which he is. You can train the boy you have in chambers to wait decently at table, because you can throw books and clothes-brushes at him, and stand over him with a bootjack while he lays the cloth; but what good ever came out of a boy in buttons, a footpage, in the waiting-line? He breaks the crockery, he ruins the tablecloth; his fingers are in every made dish, and in every jam-tart; and he very frequently runs off, buttons and all, taking with him the silver spoons and any considered trifles in the way of clothes or loose cash that he can lay his awkward hands upon. Do these hobbdehoys ever become waiters? It cannot be so. Nor do I believe in the existence of any training-school for these servitors. I never heard of such an educational institution, where the tie of the neckcloth, and the twist of the side-curl were taught; where lessons were given in the art of plate-carrying, beer out-pouring, or table-laying; or where sucking waiters received instruction in that mysterious system of arithmetic—not, decidedly, according to Cocker, but pursuant to the directions of some tavern Walkingame, in whose problems fourteen pence become one-and-fourpence, and twenty pence one-and-tenpence.

Whence, then, do waiters come? My theory is, that the grub or chrysalis state of the waiter is that anomalous being known as the "young man." The young man, mostly with long, lank hair, and in desperately threadbare black clothes, who is always in want of employment; who is continually calling on you at breakfast time, to beg you to get him "something to do;" who is willing to do anything; but who, on being put through a vivâ voce examination as to his capabilities, is generally found unable to do anything. If you suggest copying, you find that he has not paid much attention to his handwriting; indeed, his calligraphy suggests nothing half so much as the skating of an intoxicated sweep over a sheet of ice. If you recommend emigration, ten to one the "young man" has already made a voyage to Port Philip or Natal, and found it "didn't suit him." You ask him whether he has been brought up to any trade, and he answers brightly that he has served part of his time as a music-smith, and is immediately clamorous for employment in that line, looking quite reproachfully upon you if you do not set him at once to work in hammering trombones and forging triangles. Your friends and relatives in the country are embarrassingly addicted to sending you young men of this description. I remember one who brought me a letter of introduction in which the writer modestly threw out a hint that I might perhaps find an opening on the press for young Noseworthy—which was the young man's name. I have

a panacea for ridding myself of these young men. I give them a letter to the stage-manager of some theatre royal, with a view to obtaining an engagement in the noble corps of supers; and young Noseworthy either subsides into a peaceable crusader, peasant, Italian noble, or halberdier, or else he is so rebuffed and browbeaten, and ordered off, and hustled at stage-doors, and by the janitors thereof, that his nose is quite put out of joint, his spirit broken, and he troubles me no more. All, however, do not enjoy the possession of such a young man's best safety-valve; and even I have found the experiment fail in one or two instances; the young man, unsuccessful as a super, having called on me thirteen mornings running, to tell me that he has not yet seen Mr. Buckstone. One Phillips haunted me in this manner for months. He knew the outside of every theatre in London. He used to appear at my bedside in the morning with my shaving water. He came at last to criticise the performances—from the playbills—and attained, at last, such a pitch of depravity as to ask for theatrical orders. By this, however, he at once assumed a hostile position, sinking from the comparatively harmless young man into the noxious and abhorred order-hunter, and, as my mode of dealing with that horrible plague is very sharp and speedy, Phillips very soon saw the last of my door-mat, and was at liberty thenceforth to contemplate the outside of my street-door—inside thereof, he never passed more. The young man lodges at a coffee-shop, and is always looking into Mr. Ackerman's and Mr. Graves's windows. Sometimes he is advertised for to come forward and give testimony to an unprovoked assault upon an elderly gentleman of which he has been a witness. How long he remains in this transition state I do not know; but he suddenly casts his skin, and starts up a full-blown butterfly of a waiter. This is, of course, but speculation; but I think it is true. Either he does this, or he enlists—no; he is too weak in the legs for that—or he becomes a mute.

Wherever and however he picks up his education you find the waiter in the possession of many accomplishments. He can always read and write passably. He knows the railway time-bill by art; he has a prodigious memory; he balances plates and dishes with the agility of a juggler; and if his rhetoric be not classical, it is at least fluent and sustained. Finally, I may observe, that there are three classes of waiter types, each possessing special characteristics—putty-faced waiters, who are servile and fawning; whiskered waiters, who are tall, solemn, and generally rise into landlords; baldheaded waiters who are patronisingly friendly, and excellent judges of wine.

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LAW AND ORDER.

SAID Lord Bacon, "So great is the accumulation of the statutes, so often do those statutes cross each other, and so intricate are they, that the certainty of the law is entirely lost in the heap." Lord Bacon said this when the number of our public statutes was two thousand one hundred and seventy-one. Thus, the profoundest brain that ever a wig covered, pronounced itself to be lost in the maze of a law constructed of two thousand one hundred and seventy-one disjointed statutes. From his day to our own, the maze has been incessantly in progress of enlargement. New laws are hung on to the outskirts of the rest, faster than new streets on the outskirts of this our metropolis; new legal neighbourhoods spring up, new streets of law are pushed through the heart of old established legislation, and all this legal building and improvement still goes on with little or no carting away of the old building materials and other rubbish. We have actually made simple addition to the statutes since her Majesty's happy accession, of a number actually greater than the whole sum known in Bacon's time. One hundred and thirty-four public acts were passed only in the very last session of parliament. The present number of our statutes—leaving private bills and Scotch law out of calculation—is no fewer than eighteen thousand two hundred and ninety, which are inscribed in five-and-fifty volumes upon somewhere about fifty thousand pages. If, therefore, two thousand statutes perplexed Bacon, what sort of a legal genius must he be, who can feel easy with eighteen thousand on his mind? It is manifest that in these law-making days it should need nine Bacons to make one Judge.

Let us go back to Bacon's time, and hear what, on the prompting of that wise man, James the First said to his parliament: "There be in the common law divers contrary reports and precedents; and this corruption doth likewise concern the statutes and acts of parliament, in respect that there are divers cross and cuffling statutes, and some so penned as they may be taken in divers, yea contrary senses; and therefore would I wish both those statutes and reports, as well in the parliament as common law, to be at once

maturely reviewed and reconciled; and that not only all contrarieties should be scraped out of our books, but even that such penal statutes as were made but for the use of the time which do not agree with the condition of this our time, ought likewise to be left out of our books. And this reformation might, methinks, be made a worthy work, and well deserves a parliament to be sat of purpose for doing it."

To this day we are still asking for this mature revision and reconciliation; while we add heap to heap confusedly, and mingle living laws with dead. There are on the books ten thousand dead statutes for England alone, relating to subjects as vain as the carrying of coals to Newcastle. "The living die in the arms of the dead," said Bacon; and we are at this day only echoing his warning. We labour under written and unwritten law, common law and customs, and distinct systems of legislation for England, Scotland, and Ireland; to say nothing of special laws or privileges for such other of the British isles as Jersey or the Isle of Man. Before the Union, there were two thousand two hundred and sixty-three statutes peculiar to Ireland; and thirteen hundred have been added since. To administer these laws, we have courts with machinery so defective that they not only delay justice, but sometimes decide unjustly; and, to remedy that evil, we have another tribunal for the restraining of the first, and maintaining the balance of equity by means of a machinery most cumbersome and iniquitous of all. Not satisfied with courts of law and equity, the country has, for the administration of its justice, three sets of ecclesiastical courts, acting on a third set of principles, and so contrived that they may all be brought into judgment on the same case at the same time, and arrive each at its own distinct and different conclusion. These ecclesiastical laws are, moreover, so exquisitely contrived that even an Archbishop of Canterbury, once caught by a finger, may—as has just happened—be dragged, against his will, into a life-long litigation, and be forced to spend thousands of pounds upon a suit for the object of which he cares much less than a farthing. Finally—there is a great deal more, but time and matter press us to be quick—finally, there is the highest

tribunal in the land, the House of Lords, with its appellate jurisdiction. Before this last resort—in the usual shape of two or three (sometimes in the shape of only two) old gentlemen who differ in opinion—the opinion of the other regular, professional judges may be brought for trial. On the woolsack, the Lord Chancellor, who, as an equity judge, is supposed to be ignorant of common law, is at liberty, with the help of a superannuated friend, to unsettle and reverse the decision, say of the fifteen common law judges; who consider themselves to have already settled the case in question.

Every Briton knows how the laws are made; which, after they are made, have to be thus administered. Governments have ideas, and private members have ideas. Bills are brought in by private members upon special subjects with a pardonable, indeed, usually with an inevitable, ignorance of the previous history of legislation on those subjects. Government thinks it prejudicial to its interests to refuse leave to introduce such bills; and they are introduced. Amendments are proposed wherewith to trip them up, and so they scramble through the session; some passing and some passing away; the greater number living till they perish in the general massacre of bills, which is the catastrophe of every legislative season.

How freely, even in spite of yearly massacres, the crop of legislation springs, another figure or two will suggest. On the subject of the qualification and election of a member of parliament, there exist one hundred and eighty-five acts. On the subject of Poor Law there are, in the statute-book, one hundred and twenty acts. Upon the matter of stamps, there are one hundred and thirty acts. Upon the subject of excise, one hundred and twenty. One act ought to suffice for each of these matters; yet the statutes still include four or five thousand pages of dead revenue law. Even the law concerning sheriffs and their officers, is published in no less than fifty-five separate acts of parliament. The consequence of all this is, that judge and counsel, when they exercise their wits on any case, must either put faith in a fallible digest or manual made by a private lawyer—if by chance that contains the information wanted—or they must go through the whole of the statutes from Magna Charta to the present day; and, with the help of an imperfect index, find the bit of statute they require, as well as make sure that it has not been affected or modified by any other bit of statute bearing later date. Then, of course, there are also contradictions in abundance. Public and general provisions of all sorts, often conflicting in their principles, are slipped into local acts.

Some years ago there were appointed two commissions; one to inquire into the common law; the other to inquire into the law of real

property. A bill originated by one commission placed the limitation of payment in case of arrears of rent, at six years; a bill originated by the other commission placed it at twenty years; both bills became law, and much litigation followed, to determine which law was the one to be obeyed. Here, and in a hundred like cases, we have—as our chief labourer for law reform, Lord Brougham, has said—"the legislature in the aspect—not of a doating person who forgets in old age recent events,—not recollecting one day or one hour what he had said the day or the hour before; but of one who, being in the very last stage of mental imbecility, forgets at the close of a sentence what he had said at its commencement." Even where there is no direct conflict of meaning, there are great and numerous obscurities of style; and, let us judge how much uncertainty arises out of those from the confusion which arose out of so simple a thing as the use of the word "may" in acts of parliament; upon which it was questioned, whether it gave power and required such power to be used, or gave power which might be used, or be suffered to lie dormant, at discretion.

In this nice splitting of distinctions—a right strictness unduly strained—lies the main obstacle to our exchange of the huge, undigested lump of English law for anything approaching to the simple clearness of the Code Napoléon. We need a code of law. The famous code of Justinian was perfected in less than four years; fourteen months of which were spent in winnowing the grain out of the legal chaff accumulated in a thousand years. Trebonian, aided by a staff of seventeen lawyers, in three years reduced three million sentences to one hundred and fifty thousand; so perfecting the pandects and institutes. For the framing of the Code Napoléon a commission of jurists was appointed on the twelfth of August in the year eighteen hundred. In four months it delivered its report, which was then opened to criticism. The council of state afterwards completed the discussion of it in one hundred and two sittings.

It was recommended chiefly to Napoleon by the law of inheritance, which broke up property; and, leaving him the right of founding a small number of great fortunes round his throne, destroyed the worldly power of men who were not the creatures of his empire. That he held by the code for this reason, and for this reason desired its introduction in all subjugated states, he avowed more than once distinctly and emphatically in his letters to his brother Joseph. This being its recommendation to the despot, to the people it recommended itself strongly also, as a simple and plain code of civil justice; and, for the sake of that, most nations which have once received it, have held by it gladly and firmly. Is it said that there

are famous instances of codes put in the place of complex law by despots; that it is not possible to effect any like change in the case of a self-governing community? There is, to reassure us, the New York codification of the statute law; by which it is reduced into the limits of three volumes, out of which codification no difficulty at all has sprung. There is also the code of Louisiana.

But it is to be conceded that the prospect of an English code of statute law is, in these days, very remote. Many efforts have been made during the last thirty years by our best lawyers to condense our mass of law, and, whenever the efforts have assumed the form of code-making, there has been a spell that bound them fast. A criminal bill—which was a first attempt at a criminal code—was brought into the House of Lords four years ago, and referred to a select committee. At the outset, the terms used in it had to be defined; and the select committee—which included the Lord Chancellor, the Lord Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench, and four law-lords who had filled the office of Lord Chancellor—met eleven times, consulted for five or six hours every time, and finally abandoned the attempt to come to an agreement on the meaning of such terms as “malice aforethought,” “wilfully,” and the like, in despair. At this rate, how long would it take to reduce thousands of statutes to a single code?

In this state of the question, the proposal made is to avoid occasion for debate, by postponing the effort to recast the laws,—to unsay them and say them again,—but to be satisfied with weeding out of them every dead part, fusing together iterations, and combining carefully into a single statute all the scattered sentences relating to a single subject.

As we have said, on the subject of revenue only, five or six volumes of statutes may, at a single throw, be tossed away; the one hundred and eighty-five acts on the constitution and privileges of a member of the House of Commons may be digested into one. Over such consolidation of the laws—if it were founded upon the pruning and collection of men able enough to be trusted—very little breath of controversy need be wasted; and, when that work is finished—when the fifty thousand pages of law have, by a strict, legal, and literary pruning, been reduced to five thousand or ten thousand—it will be easier, by the subtlest process of digestion, to produce a code that shall be creditable to us as a civilized community.

There have been several efforts made with various success in the way of law amendment. Thirty years ago, Sir Robert Peel, in three statutes, consolidated a large mass of the old criminal law. Five years afterwards, Lord Melbourne consolidated the whole law relating to offences against the person. The Chief Baron of the Exchequer procured the

passing of a law which brought together all the regulations scattered among many local acts with reference to notices of action, statutes of limitation, and double and treble costs. Better still in the way of superseding old, bad law, with better; two acts of Parliament—the act which established County Courts and that which regulated a fresh Common Law Procedure, for which we have Mr. Baron Martin, Mr. Baron Bramwell, and Mr. Justice Willes to thank—have saved a million a-year to the law-needing part of the community.

So much out of two simplifications only. What would we save if we could have, in England, any court resembling that in France and other continental countries, before which litigants can have their causes heard previous to trial, by an impartial and practised man able to give them proper counsel? In some countries, where such counsel exists, four-fifths of the causes that arise are quashed by a summary and wholesome reconciliation; the eyes of the litigants having been opened by a trustworthy and impartial umpire, all the heart-burning and demoralisation of the law-suit is, in four cases out of five, avoided. In France, there are settled in this manner three causes out of four. However, let us not hope anything too wild in the way of British law. It will be time enough for our great grandchildren to dream of getting anything so sensible as courts like these. We go back to the much quieter topics of consolidation and reform.

For it should be known that upon these topics we have encouragement to speak; inasmuch as they have been frequently discussed during the present session of parliament. We have legal authority for what we state. Reforms suggested by Lord Brougham eight-and-twenty years ago, and declared visionary then, have since been adopted, one by one, each one generally after the iterated impulse of suggestion, year by year. Good deeds are always long a-doing in our legislature. The question of County Courts was under consideration for not less than half a century. The Charitable Trusts Bill, though, one might think, of very manifest use and justice, was under consideration thirty years. It took Lord Brougham six years and a half to get acceptance for the law which allows parties to a suit to tell the court themselves what they are fighting over; it took the same law reformer ten years to pass his bill for abolishing the Master's Office. When, in eighteen hundred and thirty-three, Lord Brougham, being Chancellor, issued a commission to consider the amendment of the statute law, the report of that commission obtained no serious and practical attention from the legislature. Only three years ago the present Lord Chancellor proposed a step towards consolidation of the statute law. That has not been taken;

and, a year afterwards, the commission was appointed which now sits, and out of which comes Sir Fitzroy Kelly, as an independent member, backed by the commission, though not representing it, and boldly offers—if the legislature will but second him—to deal with the whole subject by groups, and procure, with the best legal aid, a complete consolidation of statute law in less than two years' time. "I declare," said the chivalrous knight—member for either Suffolk or La Mancha—at the close of his oration, promising help to us all; "I declare, deliberately and unreservedly, that such is the present state of our law and legislation—so much has been done, and so many persons are competent to do all that yet remains to be done—that I do not know why a single grievance in the administration of the law of England should be permitted to continue unredressed." The honourable house, we fear, will let him feel the reason why. In the meantime, he is allowed to begin by laying on the table two bills; one consolidating the law of offences against the person, which diminishes the statute books by one thousand pages; the other bringing into one act, all that has been ordained concerning promissory notes and bills of exchange: thus cancelling thirteen or fourteen statutes, and getting rid of some four or five hundred pages of the interminable statute book.

We have been promised also by the present government through its solicitor-general, not merely a measure for the extinction of the testamentary jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical courts, but a series of measures having for object, the utter abolition of all these tribunals. The public will be very grateful for such measures—when it gets them; but there is in the ecclesiastical courts a remarkable tenacity of life. They were condemned by a commission twenty years ago; by subsequent commissions and committees, and they have been exposed, during the whole time, to a strong battery of public execration. Nevertheless, fifteen successive bills have been introduced for the purpose of removing the jurisdiction of these rotten and scandalous establishments to other courts, and all have failed. There they still remain—three hundred and seventy-two ecclesiastical courts, in the whole—with old men, boys, women, friends of any right reverend patron, picking up rich crumbs in them. They toss people from one to another. An executor having taken out the probate of a will in one court's jurisdiction, if there be only five pounds' worth of property found in another jurisdiction, must take out another probate; after that, property may be found in another province, which will require the taking out of a probate from the other archbishop; and, after all, no such probate is good for Scotland or for Ireland. There are pickings here and pickings there; references to Chancery where there is real property in question, and

often reference to common law in the form of trials for issues, to prove facts. Estates are sometimes swallowed up; nephews, and nearer or more distant relatives of bishops and archbishops, receive thousands upon thousands as the fruit of business so transacted, or for taking care of wills in offices like those of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, which are not fire-proof, and are situated next door to a chandler's shop. What need we say of the property qualification for divorce—of the procedure in case of scandals in the church? Why should we wish it to put scandal down by this jurisdiction, while the court itself stands before the country as the chief of scandals? They do without it very well in Scotland; where, for the last thirty years, the ecclesiastical courts' jurisdiction has been transferred to the sheriffs' court. They do without them everywhere else in Europe or America. Nevertheless, it is very doubtful whether we can do without them here; in other words, whether those who batten and fatten on such abuses can do without their inordinate fees and enormous salaries.

But one touch more is needed to complete this rough sketch of the union between law and order on our statute-books and records. Of the legislation thus conducted no proper accounts are kept. We have, indeed, some consolidation of the criminal law, and some effort to supply annually criminal statistics. But while in France the whole relation of crime to the population is set forth by tables of the results of accusations and decisions, carefully recorded, we have no returns whatever from our civil courts; none with regard to the common law, and none from any of the courts of equity. Even the returns we have are almost useless. To save trouble and expense, columns of information as to the age of each person and the degree of his information were omitted; then, to save a few more halfpence out of sense while throwing away thousands upon folly, we left off recording even so much as sex. Of course, as we never attempted to provide means of comparing the number of offences with the number of convictions, or the number of either with the population of any district in which they occurred, much information was not to be got out of the tables even before curtailments were attempted. Indeed, they are positively deceptive. We happen to have discovered, through the complex machinery of a parliamentary commission, that between the years eighteen hundred and six and eighteen hundred and twenty-six the number of forgeries committed in this country was diminished by one-half. The criminal returns, which record—not offences but convictions only—represent the frequency of the crime as having within the same years doubled. We have no record of results at all, even in criminal cases, that throw light on questions of transportation, penal servitude, or tickets-of-leave. Our

laws, in short, are so translucent and so simple and so orderly, that we need carry no light at all in travelling among them !

MALINES.

I AM at Malines, on the Dyle, in Belgium, and the first person I meet is a placid watery-faced man, rolling a bandbox on a wheelbarrow. Any one remaining ten years in the country could hardly find a trait of national manners more characteristic. Our honest neighbours seem to have taken for their motto the sensible device of Jehan le Maire—*depeu assez*, enough with little—and they sturdily abide by the pithy maxim in all their concerns. Roving on a little farther, with a leathern bag in one hand and an umbrella (to keep up appearances) in the other, I meet a marriage procession. A pleasanter scene of quiet comedy than that presented by the six people which form it never stood out from the page of Cervantes or Le Sage. The bridegroom, a bumpkin, is drawing at a black untractable cigar, unaware that its fire is extinct, and shyly looking away from his wife ; he stares uneasily at his large awkward hands in their wedding gloves, and spreads his fingers rigidly out fanwise. They resemble ten white puddings in tight cracked skins. It occurs at once to all beholders that he has probably never gone through a period of time so exquisitely distressing as this morning of the happiest day of his life.

The bride, clenching a stiff upright nosegay, holds on with her thumb and the stalks of the flowers to one of his drooping arms, and appears to be unconsciously pinching the extreme point of the elbow. She is hanging back as far as possible ; her face, naturally pretty enough, is the colour of beet-root from confusion and exposure to the sun ; her eyes droop with all the shrinking sensitiveness of provincial modesty. She has wriggled backwards a great part of her bridal veil, and it has tugged her virginal wreath all on one side. I am sure she cannot think what is making her feel so uncomfortable about the head, and she dares not put her hand up to take out the pin which is galling her, lest she should drop her flowers or her handkerchief. As for speaking to her husband and asking him to hold either, it is not to be thought of for a moment, though she is almost ready to cry. Two stumbling friends or relatives who have honoured the marriage ceremony with their presence follow solemnly behind, evidently not knowing exactly how to fulfil their part or do what is expected of them on so momentous an occasion. Twice the second swain has trodden heavily on the bride's dress and pulled out the gathers at her waist ; but the poor girl only reddens a deeper crimson and neither stops nor turns. A worthy elderly couple toddle contentedly in the rear ; they know the world too well to be flustered or disconcerted at its gaze. It is

for such as they that wedding breakfasts were invented, and I would wager that these good ripe souls are chiefly anxious touching the dish of pigs' feet and ears, a great local delicacy, which will doubtless be an important part of the coming entertainment.

There is something in the Belgian cities, a sort of faded importance mingled with content, of which the charm grows stronger upon you daily. They remind one of so many philosophical gentlemen whose fortunes have been much humbled, but whose tempers have been made sweeter by calamity. I do not think I should have liked them so well when they bade defiance to the chivalry of Burgundy and gave haughty protection to fugitives from the wrath of the Counts of Flanders ; when they revolted so restively against the princes of the House of Austria ; when they were the rich centres of commerce and arts, as in the time of Rubens ; or even when they shook off the yoke of Holland only five lustres ago. Now all is changed. There is no noise or display or pride about them. The glare of fashion and the pomp of wealth must be sought elsewhere. No military music is heard pealing through their tranquil streets at noonday. No great man exposes his grandeur or his folly in a gilded coach. No demagogue lifts a seditious voice in their plentiful market-places. The arrival of a company of players is an event, and the inhabitants go to see them in festival clothes. A ball is a matter to be maturely considered, and a dinner-party is a weighty affair. Yet abide awhile amongst those simple, kind-hearted Flemish folk, and you will experience a sober but great delight. They will tend you in sickness with a natural goodness most gentle and patient ; sing you drowsy songs as you get well, and tell you about their household affairs with a pathos or a humour so unaffected, a fidelity of homely detail so minute that you may suppose yourself living in a picture by Teniers. I remember taking considerable interest in the purchase of a birch broom, and feeling quite one of the family in the snug little inn where I stayed at Malines. Go, wandering traveller, about the still, clean, retired streets, and it will repose your eyes to dwell upon their peacefulness. The old painted houses, with their grotesque mediæval gables and shady projecting roofs, their niches and fretted woodwork, carry the mind at once two hundred years back. If you have really a useful imagination within call, however, you may stand in yon streak of temperate autumn sunshine, and remember the fair seigneurie as it was in the fighting days of Charles the Bold. You may, without any very great effort, see him riding under that dark, solid archway with a gallant train of knights and ladies on jennet and palfrey, hawks upon their wrists, and eager dogs held in leashes by stout serving-men. Among them, with wrinkled forehead and calm mien, goes also De

Comines, that statesman and historian who was the greatest observer of his time. He looks silently on, with an involuntary smile playing now and then about the corners of his mouth, and reins in his horse, somewhat hustled by that splendid throng. A usurer with nightcap and spectacles, his scales and his leathern money-bags, seems to grow out of the shadow of that antiquated room which juts forward and overhangs the sluggish canal to Louvain. A boor, his beer cups and his dram, may be made at once to fill the tavern summer-house beside it. But war, plague, and famine have swept over the land. The rude mountaineers of Switzerland have broken the ranks of Charles, and checked the pride of his brilliant court. Malines has been taken by the Spanish, the Dutch, the English, and the French. So the rash duke and the shrewd politician, the dainty dames and stately cavaliers, the usurer and the boor, fade away into chaos, and you find yourself beneath the massive tower of the cathedral.

Look up at the truncated steeple. It is as lofty as St. Paul's, and would have been six hundred and forty feet high, had it been completed; but, although begun in fourteen hundred and fifty-two, the design is not finished to this day, so that it may silently suggest to you an homily on the vanity of great intentions. Within is an altar-piece by Rubens, the princely painter, who called ambassadors his colleagues, and was the friend of kings. The Last Supper is the subject, and the heads of the apostles have all his striking excellence of expression, the flowing draperies his usual free bold touch; but the figure of the Redeemer is ill done, and the canvas has been injured. In the church of St. John you will likewise find the Adoration of the Magi, the Miraculous Draught of Fishes, and a receipt for the prices paid for those pictures (one hundred florins each day's work), all by the hand of the grand old Fleming. In another church is a famous picture of the Crucifixion, a master-piece of Vandyke, the handsome courtier who married an earl's daughter. Look on before you leave those churches, look in wondering admiration at their beautifully carved pulpits. Every group is full of fearful hidden meanings and dark monkish conceits. The men who wrought them have some died violent deaths by their own hands, their minds being overtaken and stimulated by that exciting and gloomy toil. Cast, therefore, no hasty tourist's glance at their excellence, but pause before each reverently, as perhaps the labour of a lifetime, the whole embodied feelings of some earnest spirit whose aspirings ended there. Every group is worth a separate study, for there is not a stroke of the sculptor's chisel but was limned by a thought.

Saunter past the Arsenal, the Town Hall, the Cannon Foundry, the College, the Academy of Arts, and the Mont de Piété; mark

the site of the fortifications which were demolished by the French in eighteen hundred and four. Take especial note of the well-managed new slaughter-houses without the town. Then pause before Tuerlinkx's statue of Margaret of Austria, and while you remember the singular death of that imperial lady, hearken to the chimes which have rung you so merrily through your walk — the musical chimes of Belgium, with a cheerful warning in every bell. Observe, as you linger there, the subdued bustle of the streets, as they gradually wake up in the afternoon, towards the end of the siesta which the Flemish borrowed from Spain. First appear the buxom milkwomen going their rounds; an odour of delicately roasted coffee soon pervades the atmosphere; and after a little while, forth comes the archbishop, an unassuming gentleman, though primate of all Belgium, with four thousand pounds a-year. He stays to speak to some tenants of the Beguinage, a noble charity which supports eight hundred aged widows. Near them, with a professional step, marches the military commandant; a pale-cheeked functionary of the Tribunal of Primary Jurisdiction paces, in grave talk with a professor from the Ecclesiastical Seminary. Here is a civil engineer employed by the railway; and there his plump worship, a civic dignitary. Resume your walk, and you may see the French emigrant general, with his trim upright figure, his high-bred courtly bow to the brewer's wife, and his careworn sorrowful aspect, when the smile with which he raised his hat has died away. Thriving tradesmen's families now go to take their after-dinner gossip at the railway station; the English, who reside here for economy, muster in the pretty public gardens; the blythe lassie of fifteen trips bashfully homeward from the convent school. Oh, how angry she is if any one sees her, especially that impudent boy, Edward Wilkins! Well, well, pretty miss (let us own it), it is undignified to be wise; and the estimable sister who seems to you such a mine of knowledge, would surely give it all for your elastic step and silvery laugh. But we are strangers, dear reader, and must not intrude on any of these parties gathering so sociably together. Let us pretend not to notice them, and pay a visit to the lace-workers. I should take off my hat and apologise to the ladies, while I explain that Malines has long been famous for a lace coarser and stronger than that of Brussels. Mechlin lace, properly so called, has been surpassed by that of Nottingham, but jealous Malines says much of that which is now sold as Brussels lace is made there. The first place we enter is a grocer's shop; there, in a back room, are some very little maidens at work; each has a cushion on her knees, with a battalion of pins stuck into it. Each winsome body has two small knobby sticks in her hand; to the sticks are attached strong

white threads, and with these she manœuvres among the pins with a rapidity so surprising, that one is fain to bless her wee heart in astonishment. Thread by thread the delicate fabric prospers on to its completion, and lace-making is obviously so elegant an employment, that the British miss may some day take a fancy to it instead of crochet. We went to several houses afterwards, and saw at least two hundred girls, all occupied in the same way at their own homes, for there is no manufactory. Their wages average fifteen sous a day for eight or nine hours' labour. The best workwomen, however, make as much as two francs and a half daily. They are said to be generally very well conducted. Prices have fallen within these few years about one half; the finest lace, which is about a foot broad and of an intricate pattern, is sold at forty-five francs a yard. The value depends on the width and design; but I am ashamed to go on, lest I should be taken for a man-milliner.

I shall conclude this paper with an observation of great novelty and truth, for I am anxious to communicate my discovery as widely as possible. It is, that a long walk in autumn weather will infallibly make one thirsty. To the reader, therefore, who has accompanied my shadowy self hither and thither as I beckoned him, I may conscientiously advise a glass of vinous fizzy beer, and dust,—both productions of the neighbourhood,—and a short rest in the open air. Let us sit down in company with a pacific-looking warrior, and a coquettish washerwoman. If we find, as we probably shall, that our presence does not afford them that lively gratification which we could desire, we can talk to a gendarme, because he is, we perceive, uncomfortable in his cocked hat; and we entertain an opinion that a brief discourse will do him good. If, stricken with the felicity of this idea, we proceed to cultivate his acquaintance, we shall learn that he is the son of an individual who was in some way connected with diligences. In political sentiments, therefore, we shall be delighted to know that he is a conservative Tory, and opposed to existing things in general. "Ah, sirs," he will say to us, "Malines is not the same place it was in my boyhood; then it lay on the greatest high road in Belgium. It was one of the busiest posting-towns known; horses were wanted every hour of the twenty-four; the whips and trumpets of the postilions, their spurs, and their bravery bewitched all womankind; then we could not even sleep of nights for noise and clatter; now we do not see ten travelling-carriages in a year, and the postilions have fattened into railway-guards, and died out as a class entirely. We were proud in those days of our felt hats, cashmere shawls, and gilt leather chairs, but all our trade is gone now except the lace, and that is going."

Our gendarme, however, had so well deve-

loped a breast to his coat, he must have found it so excellent an exercise to button it; his face looked so remarkably like a full moon; his back was so broad; his boots were so bulbous, that it was clearly nevertheless no unenviable position in life to be still a townsman of Malines.

We have ended our ramble, comrade; so your hand, and good-bye. But did it ever occur to you, as it does to me at this moment, how rare a thing after all is even the most trifling work of genius? It is as rare as beauty. Among all the thousands of books we read, how few make any durable impression on us! Only two or three writers in a century can play on that true key beneath which throbs the great heart of Nature. Thus a whole army of literary travellers have visited Malines; a dozen volumes fairly have been written about it; yet Sir Bulwer Lytton only has associated his name with the place. His noble and tender story of the heroic girl and her blind lover, in the Pilgrims of the Rhine, comes alone to the recollection of all who visit it; so abiding is the remembrance of the lightest creation of a master.

CHIP.

A ROYAL VISITOR.

THE Royal Forest of Windsor has lately been honoured by a visit from a royal bird. The eagle of the north visited the domains of the queen of the south. The particulars are as follows:—

On the afternoon of the twelfth of December last, as one of the officers of the garrison of Windsor was riding in the great park not far from the statue of King George the Third at the end of the Long Walk, he was surprised to see a large bird on the ground gorging himself with a rabbit. He advanced towards it, but the bird flew up into a tree. When on the tree it appeared to have a chain round its leg; but this was afterwards ascertained to be a portion of the rabbit he had just been eating. The pursuer then made out clearly that this large bird was an eagle; a most unusual visitor to the Royal Forest. He rode off, therefore, immediately to the keeper's lodge with the news. The keeper, while mounting his pony, stated that this bird had been seen about the forest four or five days, but had always kept out of shot. When they both got back to the place where the bird was sitting, the keeper concealed himself with his gun, while the officer rode round the bird, endeavouring to drive him over the ambush. Off he went at last, but flew wide of the keeper. Then came the riding part of the business, partaking more of the character of a steeplechase than of hunting. By dint of hard and difficult galloping among rabbit-holes, thick ferns, and open drains, the eagle was again marked down in a clump of trees. Then followed a

little stalking. The keeper on his pony and his companion on his horse advanced carefully; but the cunning bird would not allow them to come near. The keeper then got off his pony, and walked alongside the horse, which was of a grey colour, and seemed not to alarm the bird so much as the pony, which was of a dark colour.

After a few steps, the keeper suddenly and quietly glided behind a tree, and the grey horse and his rider advanced further. To divert the attention of the suspicious bird, the latter wisely made as much noise as he could, tapping the saddle with his whip, riding among the thick ferns, and pretending all the careless unconcern he could assume. In the meantime the keeper got near, and fired both barrels. The bird flew away; but had been evidently hard hit, for his flight was laboured and near the ground. He alighted at last on the bough of a young tree, where his drooping wings and fainting form made him look more like an old coat hung up as a scarecrow than an eagle.

The pursuers then both rode up. Again, although wounded and bleeding, the courageous bird started off; but he could not fly far. It was his last flight; for, in another minute, he dropt dead, shot through the right eye. The former shot had hit him in the body, but had in no way damaged his plumage. Shortly afterwards we inspected this noble bird, and found him to be a fine specimen of the white-tailed sea-eagle. He measured from wing to wing eight feet; the length of his body from his beak to his tail was three feet two inches; and he weighed ten pounds.

From his plumage, which was in excellent condition, it seemed probable that he was a wild bird; there being no marks either of cage or chain to indicate that he had ever been in captivity. His skin has been well preserved by a Windsor bird-stuffer, in a well-chosen attitude.

Three or four years ago, a golden eagle was shot in the Forest, and presented by his Royal Highness Prince Albert to Eton College.

WENSLEYDALE.

HIGH up amidst the bleak north-western hills rises the brawling brook which, receiving tiny tributary waters at various points of its course, widens to the pleasant river Eure. Rapid and shallow at first, and much cumbered with blocks of stone, broken by Hawdrow Scarr, and, lower, by Aysgarth Force, where it is shut up between lofty walls of rock, it deepens at length; and, winding through rich pasture and meadow lands, forsakes the valley, and becomes a navigable stream. The ridge of Witton Fell limits the prospect southward from the wider and lower part of the dale. Between this Fell and Penhill sweeps round Coverdale, where still

remains the ruined gateway of Coverham Abbey. Other small valleys, beautiful and secluded, diverge westward, growing wilder and more bleak towards the lake country. Some persons consider the outmost bound of Wensleydale to be the Abbey lands of Jorvaux; others place it at the village of Wensley, about seven miles up the river. At Jorvaux the country lies open and level; it has none of the character of dale scenery; but soon the slopes rise; some covered with heather and crested with fir-woods; others partially reclaimed and cultivated.

Danby Hall, the possession of the Scroopes, a dale's name for many centuries, is in this part of the valley; and, about two miles distant from it, are the ruins of a house, partly converted into cottages now, which was formerly the residence of the extinct family of Fitz-Randolph. From Harghill, an eminence behind these remains, a magnificent view of the dale is to be seen. One of the most striking features from every point is Penhill. There, the valley contracts; and, without losing its general aspect of luxuriant vegetation, it becomes more romantic. The grey castle of Middleham, with the old town below it, and the river-windings amidst woods and fields, must delight every lover of the picturesque. Indeed the prospect is one of almost endless variety; for the atmospheric changes on the hills are so beautiful, so rapid and so striking, that new points of attraction are shrouded and revealed perpetually.

The ancient town of Middleham may stand as the representative of the Past; while its rival, Leyburn, on the opposite slope of the valley, looks forward to the Future. Middleham was a possession of the powerful family of Neville. In its castle Edward of York underwent a term of imprisonment. There lived Richard of Gloucester, with Anne, his wife, daughter of the king-maker, the last of the barons whose nobility and whose power were indisputable realities. The glory of Middleham is departed now; it is declined a long way down into the twilight, and may be considered as almost on the confines of the civilised world—at the back of beyond, to use a local phrase.

Its young rival, Leyburn, is, however, a rising town. The oil-lamps which illuminated it for some ten years, gave place, six months ago, to gas; the railway is finished, and after one or two false starts, it is actually to be opened this month, really and truly. Of course, on the important occasion there will be banner-bearing and drum-beating, and a din of miscellaneous instruments; grand procession of chairman, directors, and townsmen, and a due amount of glorification in the orthodox way. Everybody dines over everything in England; and they will dine over the railway-opening at Leyburn, of course. May it (the railway, not the dinner) bring the valley prosperity, and nothing else!

Coming events have already begun to cast their shadows before. One enterprising landlord, with a view to possible visitors, has rushed into speculation, in the form of two ornamental cottages, with great prodigality of porch, parlours ten feet square, and bed-rooms on the same lavish scale of extent. Architecturally speaking, they are an improvement on the rest of the town; which appears to have been planned in a puritanical frame of mind, with a view to the mortification of men's eyes. The houses turn their backs upon the valley, and range themselves irregularly round a space, in the centre of which stands a quaint three-gabled market-house. In the good days that are coming, that ancient relic will most likely be swept away with the besom of improvement. Yet, hideous as it is, it is the only place in the town of which a stranger would be likely to inquire "What is that old building?" Pilgrims to Wensleydale would not, however, lack accommodation; for, besides those two pretty nests aforementioned, there are several good inns and private abodes where they can take up a temporary rest. It would be well worth the tourist's while to turn out of the beaten track of guide-books, and stay his feet here for a few days or weeks. If out of love with the doings of the world, and generally inclined to misanthropy, the pure air would help to invigorate his mind, and be better than any tonic to his frame. He would have his eyes refreshed with wholesome faces where, if nature has not traced her most delicate lines, starvation and neglect have not defaced humanity; his ears might regale on the purest Yorkshire dialect, and his heart be none the worse for seeing a good understanding still existing amongst rich and poor, with perhaps more of the spirit of old times than is to be found in less benighted countries. There is mutual dependence and mutual interest between cottage and hall. People get a fair day's wages for a fair day's work; and the prejudices that will linger in remote districts are respectable kindly prejudices, which would be awfully shocked to know that gaunt hunger in any shape, was shivering within a stone's-throw of a plentiful table.

In Wensleydale it is true that there are many wealthy people, and the population is not great. The landlords live amongst their tenants—quiet stay-at-home folks for the most part—and so it would be hard for any want to remain undiscovered, or any suffering to pass long unrelieved. It is to be hoped that amongst the improvements and innovations that connection with the world beyond Wensleydale may bring, there will come no violent class prejudices—no rule for screwing down the labourer's hire to the lowest farthing, and no separation and opposition of interests between great and small. If such do come, the gate into the beautiful valley had better never have been unclosed, and its

decent people would have been happier left to their old-fashioned ways till Doomsday.

Twenty years hence, Leyburn may, possibly, be a fashionable watering-place; for, it has springs of some medicinal nature; but at this present day it does not rejoice in many or various amusements. A septennial ball, talked of three months before date, and six years after, travelling menageries and the Cirque National, are its grandest dissipations of a public character. People will drive six, eight, or ten miles to dinner and back; but that is a trifle in country neighbourhoods elsewhere, as well as here. On the last visit of the wild beasts, the valley was edified by the sight of a polar bear, which the showman stated to have been taken when sitting on an iceberg in the torrid zone. No longer ago than last summer, a select troupe of equestrians, who had been patronised (according to the bills) by all the royalty and nobility of Europe, gave a splendid morning entertainment in the afternoon; during the course of which the tent was blown over by a sudden storm, whelming in one common wreck the best bonnets of the reserved seats and the clown, the Italian brothers François and Carlotta, and all the commonalty. Gentlemen performed prodigies of valour in rescuing everybody, and no ladies fainted. But it was raining at the time, they wore elegant raiment, and consequently longed for speedy shelter. I believe there was a concert once, but whether anybody went I do not know. On second thoughts I will not certify the concert at all, as I can tell nothing about it; but a conjuror comes, about once in three years, and does all the old tricks to delighted audiences. That is much better than indifferent music.

I feel some diffidence in returning to the subject of the circus; but I should like to mention two of the clown's jokes, which were quite new to us in Wensleydale, and excited most enthusiastic applause; because, perhaps, nobody who reads this paper may have heard them. Towards the middle of the entertainment, the clown hoarsely defied the gentleman with the whip—who had been boasting of his skill in the culinary art—to make a certain pie which he should name. Expectation and interest rose to the point of a broad grin. We were sure something excessively funny was coming, and listened breathless. When our curiosity had been sufficiently tantalised, and we were all privately guessing through the pie section of the cookery-book to find out what it could be, Mr. Clown asked, "Can you make a magpie?" at which sharp question the valley was convulsed—even the reserved seats—with laughter. The other joke had relation to the war in the East. The clown stated that recruiting went on slowly; but that he had discovered an infallible plan for sending every man in the kingdom to Sebastopol. He put his scheme up to competition; but, as

nobody offered to bid for it, he gave it away, and it was, "To carry all the women there, and the men would follow fast enough." This was received with agitation amongst the bonnets, and wild applause amongst the unhatted heads. There was present a large number of little boys, sufficiently tight in their jackets, who enjoyed every part of the entertainment immensely. It was a pleasure to see them there, and to know that their sixpences could be spared from the cupboard at home. May the time never come when starveling sparrows, such as flutter in town streets; and, too often, in village streets also, may be seen in Wensleydale!

The first excursion on the railway took place sometime before its completion, and resulted in an accident to the enterprising lady who originated it. She had never tried that method of travelling before; and her ardent mind, actuated by the curiosity which is so commendable a trait in her sex, induced her to enter an empty truck and to urge her husband to push it. This he did with so hearty a will that the vehicle had a sharp run of half a mile on the rails, when it tilted nearly over, and threw the fair traveller out. She had just time to exclaim that she was killed, when she sank into the soft mould of the embankment as into a quicksand; only the soles of her shoes being visible to her horrified husband when he reached the scene of the catastrophe. As a remarkable instance of the tenacity of human life, it may be stated, that the lady still survives to tell the tale; to expatiate on what her feelings were when the truck tilted over, and to describe with affecting accuracy the sensations of a lady when buried alive.

There is a beautiful walk, called Leyburn Shawl, beyond the town; the further part is a lofty, natural terrace; which, bending, and sweeping to the north, commands an extensive prospect both up and down the dale. From it is visible Bolton Castle, built by the Scroopes as a check on the proud Nevilles: it stands in an open space and looks across the valley towards Middleham, as if keeping watch. It was for a short time a place of confinement for Mary Stuart; and local tradition states that she escaped thence, and was retaken on Leyburn Shawl, at a point still called Queen Mary's Gap. The village of Wensley lies in the hollow of the dale by the river. About a mile higher is Bolton Hall. Opposite the Shawl, rises Penhill.

The next place of interest is Aysgarth Force. It is formed of two falls with a perpendicular wall of rock on one side, and a steep hill, covered with wood, on the other. It is a spot of great natural beauty, but utilitarians will be charmed to know that it has been made subservient to the purposes of a manufactory. A hideous square edifice stands just above the falls. The village of Aysgarth lies beyond; and, on the hill-side, is the fine old church surrounded by a grave-yard

which is really a pleasant place to be buried in, being in a beautiful green slope, open to the sunshine and the fresh moorland breezes; the dead rest together in families and in generations. There are many names of the yeomen of the dales which show that from sire to son they have lived on the same lands for a century or two back. They have come out of Bishopsdale and other lonely little valleys, to lay their bones side by side with their forefathers. May they do so for generations yet to come! They love not change nor innovation, and cling to the soil as tenaciously as families of more illustrious name. Aysgarth churchyard does not lack its odd epitaphs; one states that, for the recovery of an ill-fated youth, "Physics was in vain;" others hold out ungrammatical warnings, of local composition.

Still higher up the river is Hardraw Scarr; another fine water-fall; and, towards the head of the dale, is a little lake, called Simmer Water. Simmer Water belongs to legendary times. Long, long ago,—how long nobody can take upon himself to determine—there was a beautiful city in this part of Wensleydale. A city as beautiful and rich as legendary cities mostly are; but its inhabitants were a close-handed, churlish race. One glorious summer evening when the air was sultry hot and all the roads were white with dust, a pilgrim passed wearily through the gate into the town. The streets were busy with people intent on work or pleasure. Each was going his own way, looking only to his own ends, and seeking only his own prosperity. Not one turned a compassionate look on the poor wayfarer; who had taken up his stand in a public place, past which the human stream flowed continuously. He uttered his petition: "I am hungered, athirst, tired, afflicted with sore disease;" but none gave heed to him, and none stretched forth a hand to succour. He stayed there till sunset, pleading in vain; then he returned by the way he had come. As he went slowly up the hill from the city, an old couple met him who lived in a poor little cottage on its brow; they begged him to go in with them and rest. They set food before him, and ministered to all his wants. He sat on a rude bench by the threshold, from whence the inhospitable city was visible, flooded with golden and purple light; its towers rising proudly towards the sky, and its brazen gates glittering in the western rays. He bade his host look thitherward; and, whilst he gazed, there came up the valley a wind from the east, loud and strong as a tempestuous sea; then the heaven was overspread with cloud,—dense, lurid, thunderous; spears of lightning pierced its thick darkness, and it drove on with menacing growl till it came over the white marble towers and great walls of the city. For a moment it hung still as the folds of a curtain, then sank slowly down until it had enveloped the whole place with blackness.

When the cloud lifted and dispersed in the twilight grey, no trace of the city remained; where it had stood, lay Simmer Water.

A FABLE VERSIFIED.

CHILD.

WHEREFORE pinest thou, my bird?
Thy sweet song is never heard,
All a bird's best joys surround thee
Ever since the day I found thee.
Once thy voice was free and glad,
Tell me why art thou so sad?
If this coarse thread cause thy pain,
Thou shalt have a silken chain.

Still thy voice is ever mute.
Can I not thy fancies suit?
Will not silk content thy mind?
Must I something richer find?
Pray then droop no more thy head,
Thou shalt have a silver thread—
Glittering silver thread is thine;
Surely now thou canst not pine!

What? in vain? Then must I try
To humour still thy vanity;
Thou shalt have a royal chain,
Since silk and silver are too plain:
Raise thy head and proudly sing,
For behold, thou peevish thing,
I tie thee with a golden string!

Well then, since in vain I try,
Ungrateful bird, to please thee, fly!
Take thee to thy woods again,
Since thy heart, so full of pain,
Stiffes thy melodious strain!

BIRD.

Ah! these chains are bright and fine,
But for these I did not pine.
Thou hast made me once more free,
And I longed for liberty.
Keep, O keep thy chains of gold,
But let them ne'er a captive hold:
What is silver, to the sheen
Of the dewdrops on the green?
What is gold to beams of light
That thread the misty morning bright?
Naught glads me but my own free will,—
Chains of gold are fetters still.

A ROGUE'S LIFE.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS. CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

SECURE as I tried to feel in my change of costume, my cropped hair, and my whiskerless cheeks, I kept well away from the coach-window, when the dinner at the inn was over and the passengers were called to take their places again. Thus far—thanks to the strength of my grasp on his neck, which had left him too weak to be an outside-passenger—Screw had certainly not seen me; and, if I played my cards properly, there was no reason why he should see me before we got to our destination. Throughout the rest of the journey I observed the strictest caution,

and fortune seconded my efforts. It was dark when we got to Shrewsbury. On leaving the coach, I was enabled, under cover of the night, to keep a sharp watch on the proceedings of Screw and his Bow Street ally. They did not put up at the hotel; but walked away to a public-house. There, my clerical character obliged me to leave them at the door.

I returned to the hotel, to make inquiries about conveyances. The answers informed me that Crickgelly was a little fishing-village, and that there was no coach direct to it, but that two coaches running to two small Welsh towns situated at nearly equal distances from my destination, on either side of it, would pass through Shrewsbury the next morning. The waiter added, that I could book a place—conditionally—by either of these vehicles; and that, as they were always well-filled, I had better be quick in making my choice between them. Matters had now arrived at such a pass, that nothing was left for me but to trust to chance. If I waited till the morning to see whether Screw and the Bow Street runner travelled in my direction, and to find out, in case they did, which coach they took, I should be running the risk of losing a place for myself, and so delaying my journey for another day. This was not to be thought of. I told the waiter to book me a place in which coach he pleased. The two were called respectively The Humming Bee, and The Red Cross Knight. The waiter chose the latter.

Sleep was not much in my way that night. I rose almost as early as Boots himself—breakfasted—then sat at the coffee-room window looking out anxiously for the two coaches. Nobody seemed to agree which would pass first. Each of the inn servants of whom I inquired made it a matter of partisanship, and backed his favourite coach with the most consummate assurance. At last, I heard the guard's horn and the clatter of the horses' hoofs. Up drove a coach—I looked out cautiously—it was the Humming Bee. Three outside places were vacant; one behind the coachman; two on the dickey. The first was taken immediately by a farmer, the second—to my unspeakable disgust and terror—was secured by the inevitable Bow Street runner; who, as soon as he was up, helped the weakly Screw into the third place, by his side. They were going to Crickgelly; not a doubt of it, now.

I grew mad with impatience for the arrival of the Red Cross Knight. Half an hour passed—forty minutes—and then I heard another horn and another clatter—and the Red Cross Knight rattled up to the hotel-door at full speed. What if there should be no vacant place for me! I ran to the door with a sinking heart. Outside, the coach was declared to be full.

"There is one inside place," said the waiter, "if you don't mind paying the——"

Before he could say the rest, I was occupying that one inside place. I remember nothing of the journey from the time we left the hotel-door, except that it was fearfully long. At some hour of the day with which I was not acquainted (for my watch had stopped for want of winding up), I was set down in a clean little street of a prim little town (the name of which I never thought of asking), and was told that the coach never went any further.

No postchaise was to be had. With incredible difficulty I got first a gig, then a man to drive it; and, last, a pony to draw it. We hobbled away crazily from the inn door. I thought of Screw and the Bow Street runner approaching Crickgelly, from their point of the compass, perhaps at the full speed of a good post-chaise—I thought of that, and would have given all the money in my pocket for two hours' use of a fast road-hack.

Judging by the time we occupied in making the journey, and a little also by my own impatience, I should say that Crickgelly must have been at least twenty miles distant from the town where I took the gig. The sun was setting, when we first heard, through the evening stillness, the sound of the surf on the sea-shore. The twilight was falling as we entered the little fishing village, and let our unfortunate pony stop, for the last time, at a small inn door.

The first question I asked of the landlord was, whether two gentlemen (friends of mine, of course, whom I expected to meet) had driven into Crickgelly, a little while before me. The reply was in the negative; and the sense of relief it produced seemed to rest me at once, body and mind, after my long and anxious journey. Either I had beaten the spies on the road, or they were not bound to Crickgelly. Any way, I had first possession of the field of action. I paid the man who had driven me, and asked my way to Zion Place. My directions were simple—I had only to go through the village, and I should find Zion Place at the other end of it.

The village had a very strong smell, and a curious habit of building boats in the street between intervals of detached cottages; a helpless, muddy, fishy little place. I walked through it rapidly; turned inland a few hundred yards; ascended some rising ground; and discerned, in the dim twilight, four small lonesome villas standing in pairs, with a shed and a saw-pit on one side, and a few shells of unfinished houses on the other. Some madly speculative builder was evidently trying to turn Crickgelly into a watering-place.

I made out Number two, and discovered the bell-handle with difficulty, it was growing so dark. A servant-maid—corporeally enormous; but, as I soon found, in a totally undeveloped state, mentally—opened the door.

"Does Miss James live here?" I asked.

"Don't see no visitors," answered the large maiden. "'T'other one tried it and had to go away. You go, too."

"'T'other one?" I repeated. "Another visitor? And when did he call?"

"Better than an hour ago."

"Was there nobody with him?"

"No. Don't see no visitors. He went. You go, too."

Just as she repeated that exasperating formula of words, a door opened at the end of the passage. My voice had evidently reached the ears of somebody in the back parlour. Who the person was, I could not see, but I heard the rustle of a woman's dress. My situation was growing desperate, my suspicions were aroused—I determined to risk everything—and I called softly, in the direction of the open door, "Laura!"

A voice answered, "Good heavens! Frank?" It was *her* voice. She had recognised mine. I pushed past the big servant; in two steps I was at the end of the passage; in one more I was in the back parlour.

She was there, standing alone by the side of a table. Seeing my changed costume and altered face, she turned deadly pale, and stretched her hand behind her mechanically, as if to take hold of a chair. I caught her in my arms; but was afraid to kiss her; she trembled so when I only touched her.

"Frank!" she said, drawing her head back. "What is it? How did you find out? O! for mercy's sake, what does it mean?"

"It means, love, that I've come to take care of you for the rest of your life and mine, if you will only let me. Don't tremble—there's nothing to be afraid of! Only compose yourself, and I'll tell you why I am here in this strange disguise. Come, come, Laura!—don't look like that at me. You called me Frank just now, for the first time. Would you have done that, if you had disliked me or forgotten me?"

I saw her colour beginning to come back—the old bright glow returning to the dear dusky cheeks. If I had not seen them so near me, I might have exercised some self-control—as it was, I lost my presence of mind entirely, and kissed her.

She drew herself away half-frightened, half-confused—certainly not offended, and, apparently, not very likely to faint—which was more than I could have said of her when I first entered the room. Before she had time to reflect on the peril and awkwardness of our position, I pressed the first necessary questions on her rapidly, one after the other.

"Where is Mrs. Baggs?" I asked first.

Mrs. Baggs was the housekeeper.

Laura pointed to the closed folding-doors. "In the front parlour; asleep on the sofa."

"Have you any suspicion who the stranger was who called more than an hour ago?"

"None. The servant told him we saw no visitors, and he went away, without leaving his name."

"Have you heard from your father?"

She began to turn pale again, but controlled herself bravely, and answered in a whisper:

"Mrs. Baggs had a short note from him this morning. It was not dated; and it only said circumstances had happened which obliged him to leave home suddenly, and that we were to wait here till he wrote again, most likely in a few days."

"Now, Laura," I said, as lightly and jestingly as I could, "I have the highest possible opinion of your courage, good-sense, and self-control; and I shall expect you to keep up your good reputation in my eyes, while you are listening to what I have now to tell you."

Saying these words, I took her by the hand, and made her sit close by me; then, breaking it to her as gently and gradually as possible, I told her all that had happened at the red-brick house since the evening when she left the dinner-table, and we exchanged our parting look at the dining-room door.

It was almost as great a trial to me to speak as it was to her to hear. She suffered so violently, felt such evident misery of shame and terror, while I was relating the strange events which had occurred in her absence, that I once or twice stopped in alarm, and almost repented my boldness in telling her the truth. However, fair-dealing with her, cruel as it might seem at the time, was the best and safest course for the future. How could I expect her to put all her trust in me, if I began by deceiving her—if I fell into prevarications and excuses at the very outset of our renewal of intercourse? I went on desperately to the end, taking a hopeful view of the most hopeless circumstances, and making my narrative as mercifully short as possible. When I had done, the poor girl, in the extremity of her forlornness and distress, forgot all the little maidenly conventionalities and young-lady-like restraints of every day life, and, in a burst of natural grief and honest, confiding helplessness, hid her face on my bosom, and cried there as if she were a child again, and I was the mother to whom she had been used to look for comfort.

I made no attempt to stop her tears—they were the safest and best vent for the violent agitation under which she was suffering. I said nothing; words, at such a time as that, would only have aggravated her distress. All the questions I had to ask; all the proposals I had to make, must, I felt, be put off—no matter at what risk—until some later and calmer hour. There we sat together, with one long unsnuffed candle lighting us smokily; with the discordantly-grotesque sound of the housekeeper's snoring in the front room, mingling profanely with the sobs of the weeping girl on my bosom. No other noise, great or small, inside the house or out of it, was audible. The summer night looked black and cloudy through the little

back window. I was not much easier in my mind, now that the trial of breaking my bad news to Laura was over. That stranger who had called at the house an hour before me, weighed on my spirits. It could not have been Doctor Knapton. He would have gained admission. Could it be the Bow Street runner, or Screw? I had lost sight of them, it was true; but had they lost sight of me?

Laura's grief gradually exhausted itself. She feebly raised her head, and, turning it away from me, hid her face. I saw that she was not fit for talking yet, and begged her to go up-stairs to the drawing-room and lie down a little. She looked apprehensively towards the folding-doors that shut us off from the front parlour.

"Leave Mrs. Baggs to me," I said. "I want to have a few words with her; and, as soon as you are gone, I'll make noise enough here to wake her."

Laura looked at me inquiringly and amazedly. I did not speak again; but gently led her to the door.

As soon as I was alone, I took from my pocket one of the handbills which my excitable fellow-traveller had presented to me, so as to have it ready for Mrs. Baggs the moment we stood face to face. Armed with this ominous letter of introduction, I kicked a chair down against the folding-doors, by way of giving a preliminary knock to arouse the housekeeper's attention. The plan was immediately successful. Mrs. Baggs opened the doors of communication violently—a slight smell of spirits entered the room, and was followed close by the housekeeper herself, with an indignant face and a disordered head-dress.

"What do you mean, sir? How dare you—" she began; then stopped aghast, looking at me in speechless astonishment.

"I have been obliged to make a slight alteration in my personal appearance, ma'am," said I. "But I am still Frank Softly."

"Don't talk to me about personal appearances, sir," cried Mrs. Baggs, recovering. "What do you mean by being here? Leave the house immediately. I shall write to the Doctor, Mr. Softly, this very night."

"He has no address you can direct to," I rejoined. "If you don't believe me, read that." I gave her the handbill without another word of preface.

Mrs. Baggs looked at it—lost in an instant all the fine colour plentifully diffused over her face by sleep and spirits—sat down in the nearest chair with a thump that seemed to threaten the very foundations of Number two, Zion Place, and stared me hard in the face; the most speechless and helpless elderly female I ever beheld.

"Take plenty of time to compose yourself, ma'am," said I. "If you don't see the Doctor again soon under the gallows, you will probably not have the pleasure of meeting with him for some considerable time."

Mrs. Baggs smote both her hands distractedly on her knees, and whispered a devout ejaculation to herself softly.

"Allow me to deal with you, ma'am, as a woman of the world," I went on. "If you will give me half-an-hour's hearing, I will explain to you how I come to know what I do; how I got here; and what I have to propose to Miss Laura and to you."

"If you have the feelings of a man, sir," said Mrs. Baggs, shaking her head, and raising her eyes to heaven, "you will remember that I have nerves, and will not presume upon them."

As the old lady uttered the last words, I thought I saw her eyes turn from heaven, and take the earthly direction of the sofa in the front parlour. It struck me also that her lips looked rather dry. Upon these two hints I spoke.

"Might I suggest some little stimulant?" I asked, with respectful earnestness. "I have heard my grandmother (Lady Malkinshaw) say that, 'a drop in time saves nine.'"

"You will find it under the sofa pillow," said Mrs. Baggs, with sudden briskness. "'A drop in time saves nine.'—my sentiments, if I may put myself on a par with her ladyship. The liqueur glass, Mr. Softly, is in the backgammon board. I hope her ladyship was well the last time you heard from her? Suffers from her nerves, does she? Like me, again. In the backgammon-board. O, this news, this awful news!"

I found a bottle of brandy in the place indicated, but no liqueur glass in the backgammon-board. There was, however, a wine-glass, accidentally left on a chair by the sofa. Mrs. Baggs did not seem to notice the difference when I brought it into the back room, and filled it with brandy.

"Take a toothful, yourself," said Mrs. Baggs, lightly tossing off the dram in a moment. "'A drop in time,'—I can't help repeating it, it's so nicely expressed. Still, with submission to her ladyship's better judgment, Mr. Softly, the question seems now to arise, whether, if one drop in time saves nine, two drops in time may not save eighteen." Here Mrs. Baggs forgot her nerves, and winked.

I returned the wink and filled the glass a second time. "O, this news, this awful news!" said Mrs. Baggs remembering her nerves again.

Just then I thought I heard footsteps in front of the house; but, listening more attentively, found that it had begun to rain, and that I had been deceived by the pattering of the first heavy drops against the windows. However, the bare suspicion that the same stranger who had called already might be watching the house now, was enough to startle me very seriously, and to suggest the absolute necessity of occupying no more precious time in paying attention to the vagaries of Mrs. Baggs' nerves. It was also of some

importance that I should speak to her while she was sober enough to understand what I meant in a general way. Feeling convinced that she was in imminent danger of becoming downright drunk if I gave her another glass, I kept my hand on the bottle, and forthwith told my story over again, in a very abridged and unceremonious form, and without allowing her one moment of leisure for comment on my narrative, whether it might be of the weeping, winking, drinking, groaning, or ejaculating kind. As I had anticipated, when I came to a conclusion, and consequently allowed her an opportunity of saying a few words, she affected to be extremely shocked and surprised at hearing of the nature of her master's pursuits, and reproached me in terms of the most vehement and virtuous indignation for incurring the guilt of abetting them, even though I had done so from the very excusable motive of saving my own life. Having a lively sense of the humorous, I was necessarily rather amused by this; but I began to get a little surprised as well, when we diverged to the subject of the Doctor's escape, on finding that Mrs. Baggs viewed the fact of his running away to some hiding-place of his own, in the light of a personal insult to his faithful and attached housekeeper.

"It shows a want of confidence in me," said the old lady, "which I may forgive, but can never forget. The sacrifices I have made for that ungrateful man, are not to be told in words. The very morning he sent us away here, what did I do? Packed up the moment he said, Go. I had my preserves to pot, and the kitchen chimney to be swept, and the lock of my box hampered into the bargain. Other women in my place would have grumbled—I got up directly, as lively as any girl of eighteen you like to mention. Says he, 'I want Laura taken out of young Softly's way, and you must do it.'—Says I, 'This very morning, sir?'—Says he, 'This very morning.'—Says I, 'Where to?'—Says he, 'As far off as ever you can go; coast of Wales—Crickgelly. I won't trust her nearer; young Softly's too cunning, and she's too fond of him.'—'Any more orders, sir?' says I.—'Yes; take some fancy name—Simpkins, Johnson, Giles, Jones, James,' says he, 'what you like but Knapton; for that scamp Softly will move heaven and earth to trace her.'—'What else?' says I.—'Nothing, but look sharp,' says he. 'And mind one thing, that she sees no visitors, and posts no letters.' Before those last words had been out of his wicked lips an hour, we were off. A nice job I had to get her away—a nice job to stop her from writing letters to you—a nice job to keep her here. But I did it; I followed my orders like a slave in a plantation with a whip at his bare back. I've had rheumatics, weak legs, bad nights, and Miss in the sulks—all from obeying the doctor's orders. And what is my reward? He turns coiner, and

runs away without a word to me beforehand, and writes me a trumpery note, without a date to it, without a farthing of money in it, telling me nothing! Look at my confidence in him, and then look at the way he's treated me in return. What woman's nerves can stand that? Don't keep fidgeting with the bottle! Pass it this way, Mr. Softly, or you'll break it, and drive me distracted."

"He has no excuse ma'am," I said. "But will you allow me to change the subject, as I am pressed for time? You appear to be so well acquainted with the favourable opinion which Miss Laura and I entertain of each other, that I hope it will be no fresh shock to your nerves, if I inform you, in plain words, that I have come to Crickgelly to marry her."

"Marry her! marry—— If you don't leave off fidgeting with the bottle, Mr. Softly, and change the subject directly, I shall ring the bell."

"Hear me out, ma'am, and then ring if you like. If you persist, however, in considering yourself still the confidential servant of a felon who is now flying for his life, and if you decline allowing the young lady to act as she wishes, I will not be so rude as to hint that—as she is of age—she may walk out of this house with me, whenever she likes, without your having the power to prevent her; but, I will politely ask instead, what you would propose to do with her, in the straitened position as to money in which she and you are likely to be placed? You can't find her father to give her to; and, if you could, who would be the best protector for her? The doctor, who is the principal criminal in the eye of the law, or I, who am only the unwilling accomplice? He is known to the Bow Street runners—I am not. There is a reward for the taking of him, and none for the taking of me. He has no respectable relatives and friends, I have plenty. Every way my chances are the best; and consequently I am, every way, the fittest person to trust her to. Don't you see that?"

Mrs. Baggs did not immediately answer. She snatched the bottle out of my hands—drank off another dram, shook her head at me, and ejaculated lamentably: "My nerves, my nerves! what a heart of stone he must have to presume on my poor nerves!"

"Give me one minute more," I went on. I propose to take you and Laura to-morrow morning to Scotland. Pray don't groan! I only suggest the journey with a matrimonial object. In Scotland, Mrs. Baggs, if a man and woman accept each other as husband and wife, before one witness, it is a lawful marriage; and that kind of wedding is, as you must see plainly enough, the only safe refuge for a bridegroom in my situation. If you consent to come with us to Scotland, and serve as witness to the marriage, I shall be delighted to acknowledge my sense of your kindness in the eloquent language of the Bank

of England, as expressed to the world in general on the surface of a five-pound note."

I cautiously snatched away the brandy bottle as I spoke, and was in the drawing-room with it in an instant. I suppose Mrs. Baggs tried to follow me, for I heard the door rattle, as if she had got out of her chair, and suddenly slipped back into it again. I felt certain of her deciding to help us, if she was only sober enough to reflect on what I had said to her. The journey to Scotland was a tedious, and perhaps a dangerous, undertaking. But I had no other alternative to choose. In those uncivilised days, the Marriage Act had not been passed, and there was no convenient hymeneal registrar in England to change a vagabond runaway couple into a respectable man and wife at a moment's notice. The trouble and expense of taking Mrs. Baggs with us, I encountered, of course, solely out of regard for Laura's natural prejudices. She had led precisely that kind of life which makes any woman but a bad one morbidly sensitive on the subject of small proprieties. If she had been a girl with a recognised position in society, I should have proposed to her to run away with me alone. As it was, the very defencelessness of her situation gave her, in my opinion, the right to expect from me even the absurdest sacrifices to the narrowest conventionalities. Mrs. Baggs was not quite so sober in her habits, perhaps, as matrons in general are expected to be; but, for my particular purpose, this was only a slight blemish; it takes so little, after all, to represent the abstract principle of propriety in the short-sighted eye of the world.

As I reached the drawing-room door, I looked at my watch. Nine o'clock! and nothing done yet to facilitate our escaping from Crickgelly to the regions of civilised life the next morning. I was pleased to hear, when I knocked at the door, that Laura's voice sounded firmer as she told me to come in. She was more confused than astonished or frightened when I sat down by her on the sofa, and repeated the principal topics of my conversation with Mrs. Baggs.

"Now, my own love," said I, in conclusion—suiting my gestures, it is unnecessary to say, to the tenderness of my language—"there is not the least doubt that Mrs. Baggs will end by agreeing to my proposals. Nothing remains, therefore, but for you to give me the answer now, which I have been waiting for ever since that last day when we met by the river side. I did not know then what the motive was for your silence and distress. I know now, and I love you better after that knowledge than I did before it."

Her head dropped into its former position on my bosom, and she murmured a few words, but too faintly for me to hear them.

"You knew more about your father, then, than I did?" I whispered.

"Less than you have told me since,"

she interposed quickly, without raising her face.

"Enough to convince you that he was breaking the laws," I suggested; "and, to make you, as his daughter, shrink honorably from saying yes to me when we sat together on the river bank?"

She did not answer; but one of her arms, which was hanging over my shoulder, stole round my neck, and clasped it gently.

"Since that time," I went on, "your father has compromised me. I am in some danger, not much, from the law. I have no prospects that are not of the most doubtful kind; and I have no excuse for asking you to share them, except that I have fallen into my present misfortune through trying to discover and remove the obstacle that kept us apart. If I had not loved you better than every other interest of my life, I should never have tried to contend with that obstacle. If there is any protection in the world that you can turn to less doubtful than mine, I suppose I ought to say no more, and leave the house. But if there should be none, surely I am not so very selfish in asking you to take your chance with me? I honestly believe that I shall have little difficulty, with ordinary caution, in escaping from pursuit, and finding a safe home somewhere to begin life in again with new interests. Will you share it with me, Laura? I can try no fresh persuasions—I have no right, perhaps, in my present situation, to have addressed so many to you already."

Her other arm stole round my neck; she laid her warm cheek against mine, and whispered,—

"Be kind to me, Frank—I have nobody in the world who loves me but you!"

I felt her tears on my face; my own eyes moistened as I tried to answer her. We sat for some minutes in perfect silence—without moving, without a thought beyond the moment. The rising of the wind, and the splashing of the rain outside were the first sounds that stirred me into action again.

I summoned my resolution, rose from the sofa, and in a few hasty words told Laura what I proposed for the next day, and mentioned the hour at which I would come in the morning. As I had anticipated, she seemed relieved and reassured at the prospect even of such slight sanction and encouragement on the part of another woman as would be implied by the companionship of Mrs. Baggs on the journey to Scotland. The next and last difficulty I had to encounter, was necessarily connected with her father. He had never been very affectionate with her; and he was now, for aught she or I knew to the contrary, parted from her for ever. Still, the instinctive recognition of his position made her shrink, at the last moment, when she spoke of him, and thought of the serious nature of her engagement with me. After some vain arguing and remonstrating, I contrived to quiet her scruples, by promising that an

address should be left at Crickgelly, to which any second letter that might arrive from the doctor could be forwarded. When I saw that this prospect of being able to communicate with him, if he wrote or wished to see her, had sufficiently composed her mind, I left the drawing-room. It was vitally important that I should get back to the inn and make the necessary arrangements for our departure the next morning, before the primitive people of the place had retired to bed.

As I passed the back parlour-door on my way out, I heard the voice of Mrs. Baggs raised indignantly. The words "bottle!" "audacity!" and "nerves!" reached my ear disjointedly. I called out "Good-bye! till to-morrow;" heard a responsive groan of disgust, then opened the front-door and plunged out into the dark and rainy night.

It might have been the dropping of water from the cottage roof while I passed through the village, or the groundless alarm of my own suspicious fancy, but I thought I was being followed as I walked back to the inn. Two or three times, I turned round abruptly; but, if twenty men had been at my heels, it was too dark to see them. I went on to the inn. The people there were not gone to bed; and I sent for the landlord to consult with him about a conveyance. Perhaps it was my suspicious fancy again; but I thought his manner was altered. He seemed half distrustful, half afraid of me, when I asked him if there had been any signs, during my absence, of those two gentlemen, for whom I had already inquired on arriving at his door that evening. He gave an answer in the negative, looking away from me while he spoke. Thinking it advisable, on the whole, not to let him see that I noticed a change in him, I proceeded at once to the question of the conveyance, and was told that I could hire the landlord's light cart, in which he was accustomed to drive to the market town. I appointed an hour for starting the next day, and retired at once to my bed-room. There, my thoughts were anxious enough. I was anxious about Screw and the Bow Street runner. I was uncertain about the stranger who had called at Number two, Zion Place. I was uncertain even about the landlord of the inn. Never did I know what real suffering from suspense was until that night.

Whatever my apprehensions might have been, they were none of them realised the next morning. Nobody followed me on my way to Zion Place, and no stranger had called there before me a second time, when I made inquiries on entering the house. I found Laura blushing, and Mrs. Baggs impenetrably wrapped up in dignified sulkiness. After informing me with a lofty look that she intended to go to Scotland with us, and to take my five pound note, partly under protest, and partly out of excessive affection for Laura, she retired to pack up. The time consumed in performing this process, and the further delay occasioned

by paying small outstanding debts to tradespeople, and settling with the owner of the house, detained us till nearly noon, before we were ready to get into the landlord's cart. I looked behind me anxiously at starting, and often afterwards on the road; but never saw anything to excite my suspicions. In settling matters with the landlord over night, I had arranged that we should be driven to the nearest town at which a post-chaise could be obtained. My resources were just as likely to hold out against the expenses of posting, where public conveyances could not be obtained, as against the expense of waiting privately at hotels, until the right coaches might start. According to my calculations, my money would last till we got to Scotland. After that, I had my watch, rings, shirt-pin, and Mr. Batterbury, to help in replenishing my purse. Anxious, therefore, as I was about other things, money-matters, for once in a way, did not cause me the smallest uneasiness.

We posted five-and-thirty miles, then stopped for a couple of hours to rest, and wait for a night coach, running northward. On getting into this vehicle we were fortunate enough to find the fourth inside-place not occupied. Mrs. Baggs showed her sense of the freedom from restraint thus obtained by tying a huge red comforter round her head like a turban, and immediately falling fast asleep. This gave Laura and me full liberty to talk as we pleased. Our conversation was for the most part of that particular kind which is not of the smallest importance to any third person in the whole world. One portion of it, however, was an exception to this general rule. It had a very positive influence on my fortunes, and it is, therefore, I hope, of sufficient importance to bear being communicated to the reader.

We had changed horses for the fourth time, and seated ourselves comfortably in our places, and had heard Mrs. Baggs resume the kindred occupations of sleeping and snoring, when Laura whispered to me:

"I must have no secrets, now, from you—must I Frank?"

"You must have anything you like, do anything you like, and say anything you like. You must never ask leave—but only grant it!"

"Shall you always tell me that, Frank?"

I did not answer in words, but the conversation suffered a momentary interruption. Of what nature, susceptible people will easily imagine. As for the hard-hearted I don't write for them.

"My secret need not alarm you," Laura went on, in tones that began to sound rather sadly, "it is only about a tiny pasteboard box that I can carry in the bosom of my dress. But it has got three diamonds in it Frank, and one beautiful ruby. Did you ever give me credit for having so much that was valuable about me?—shall I give it you to keep for me?"

I remembered directly Old File's story of Mrs. Knapton's elopement, of the jewels she had taken with her, and of her husband's suspicions that she had kept some of them concealed from him to the day of her death.

"It is your fortune, Laura," I answered; "and I think that its present enviable position in the bosom of your dress is the best that it can possibly occupy. But who gave you these valuable jewels?"

"My mother," said Laura, softly. "I think I told you that I was by her bedside from the time of her illness to the time of her death. She was not very happy with my father—I must say as much as that, to make you understand what I am going to tell you. One night, when she knew she was dying, she made me promise beforehand to keep what she was going to say a secret from my father and everybody, except my husband, in case I ever married. She then gave me this little box, and told me never to let it out of my possession, for there were jewels in it worth at least four or five hundred pounds. She said it was all she had to leave me if I was ever unhappy with my father, or if I ever found myself alone and helpless in the world. And then she told me that my father had always suspected her, from the time of my birth, of keeping some of her jewels hidden from him—that she was afraid to tell him she had done it for my sake—and that I was never to let him know it, as I valued her last commands and her dying blessing. I think, Frank, that was all that passed between us; and I know that I have always done as she bade me, since. My father never said so in plain words; but I feel sure, when my mother was gone, he suspected me, as he had suspected her. It was hard to keep to my promise sometimes—when I did not know how to value a provision for me, as I value it now. We shan't be quite helpless, Frank, even if your friends won't help you—shall we?"

The relief that I felt after hearing Laura's narrative was not of a nature to be communicated to her. If any unforeseen accident placed me within the gripe of the law, I should not now have the double trial to endure of leaving my wife for a prison, and leaving her helpless. Fearing that she might get some hint of what was passing in my mind, if I allowed her to ask too many questions about our future, I changed the subject as soon as possible.

Morning dawned and found us still awake. The sun rose, Mrs. Baggs left off snoring, and we arrived at the last stage before the coach stopped. I got out to see about some tea for my travelling companions, and looked up at the outside passengers. One of them seated in the dickey, looked down at me. He was a countryman in a smock-frock, with a green patch over one of his eyes. Something in the expression of his uncovered eye made me pause—reflect—turn away uneasily—and

then look again at him furtively. A sudden shudder ran through me from top to toe; my heart sank; and my head began to feel giddy. The countryman in the dickey was no other than the Bow Street runner.

I kept away from the coach till the fresh horses were on the point of starting, for I was afraid to let Laura see my face, after making that fatal discovery. She noticed how pale I was when I got in. I made the best excuse I could; and gently insisted on her trying to sleep a little after being awake all night. She lay back in her corner; and Mrs. Baggs, comforted with a morning dram in her tea, fell asleep again. I had thus an hour's leisure before me to think what I should do next.

Screw was not in company with the runner this time. He must have managed to identify me somewhere, and the officer doubtless knew my personal appearance well enough now to follow and make sure of me without help. That I was the man whom he was tracking could not be doubted: his disguise and his position on the top of the coach proved it only too plainly. But why had he not seized me at once? Probably, because he had some ulterior purpose to serve, which would have been thwarted by my immediate apprehension. What that purpose was I did my best to fathom, and, as I thought, succeeded in the attempt. What I was to do when the coach stopped was a more difficult point to settle. To give the runner the slip, with two women to take care of, was simply impossible. To treat him, as I had treated Screw at the red-brick house, was equally out of the question, for he was certain to give me no chance of catching him alone. To keep him in ignorance of the real object of my journey, and thereby to delay his discovering himself and attempting to make me a prisoner, seemed the only plan on the safety of which I could place the smallest reliance. If I had ever had any idea of following the example of other runaway lovers, and going to Gretna Green, I should now have abandoned it. All roads in that direction would betray what the purpose of my journey was if I took them. Some large town in Scotland would be the safest destination that I could publicly advertise myself as bound for. I determined to say that I was going with the two ladies to Edinburgh.

Such was the plan of action which I now adopted. To give any idea of the distracted condition of my mind at the time when I was forming it, is simply impossible. As for doubting whether I ought to marry at all, under these dangerous circumstances, I must frankly own that I was too selfishly and violently in love to look the question fairly in the face at first. When I subsequently forced myself to consider it, the most distinct project I could frame for overcoming all difficulty was, to marry myself (the phrase is strictly descriptive of

the Scotch ceremony) at the first inn we came to, over the Border; to hire a chaise, or take places in a public conveyance to Edinburgh, as a blind; to let Laura and Mrs. Baggs occupy those places; to remain behind myself; and to trust to my audacity and cunning, when left alone, to give the runner the slip. Writing of it now, in cool blood, this seems as wild and hopeless a plan as ever was imagined. But, in the confused and distracted state of all my faculties at that period, it seemed quite easy to execute, and not in the least doubtful as to any one of its probable results.

On reaching the town at which the coach stopped, we found ourselves obliged to hire another chaise for a short distance, in order to get to the starting-point of a second coach. Again we took inside places, and again, at the first stage, when I got down to look at the outside passengers, there was the countryman with the green shade over his eye. Whatever conveyance we travelled by on our northward road, we never escaped him. He never attempted to speak to me, never seemed to notice me, and never lost sight of me. On and on we went, over roads that seemed interminable, and still the dreadful sword of Justice hung always, by its single hair, over my head. My haggard face, my feverish hands, my confused manner, my inexpressible impatience, all belied the excuses with which I desperately continued to ward off Laura's growing fears, and Mrs. Baggs's indignant suspicions. "O! Frank, something has happened! For God's sake, tell me what!" "Mr. Softly, I can see through a deal board as far as most people. You are following the Doctor's wicked example, and showing a want of confidence in me." These were the remonstrances of Laura and the housekeeper.

At last we got out of England and I was still a free man. The chaise (we were posting again) brought us into a dirty town, and drew up at the door of a shabby inn. A shock-headed girl received us.

"Are we in Scotland?" I asked.

"Mon! whar' else should ye be?" The accent relieved me of all doubt.

"A private room—something to eat, ready in an hour's time—chaise afterwards to the nearest place from which a coach runs to Edinburgh." Giving these orders rapidly, I followed the girl with my travelling companions into a stuffy little room. As soon as our attendant had left us, I locked the door, put the key in my pocket, and took Laura by the hand.

"Now, Mrs. Baggs," said I, "bear witness—"

"You're not going to marry her now!" interposed Mrs. Baggs, indignantly. "Bear witness, indeed! I won't bear witness till I've taken off my bonnet, and put my hair tidy!"

"The ceremony won't take a minute," I answered; "and I'll give you your five-pound

note and the key of the door the moment it's over. Bear witness," I went on, drowning Mrs. Baggs's expostulations with the all-important marriage-words, "that I take this woman, Laura Knapton, for my lawful wedded wife."

"In sickness and in health, in poverty and wealth," broke in Mrs. Baggs, determining to represent the clergyman as well as to be the witness.

"Laura, dear," I said, interrupting in my turn, "repeat my words. Say 'I take this man, Francis Softly, for my lawful wedded husband.'"

She repeated the sentence, with her face very pale, with her dear hand cold and trembling in mine.

"For better for worse," continued the indomitable Mrs. Baggs. "Little enough of the Better, I'm afraid, and Lord knows how much of the Worse!"

I stopped her again with the promised five-pound note, and the key of the room-door. "Now, ma'am," said I, "take off your bonnet, and put your hair as tidy as you please."

Mrs. Baggs raised her eyes and hands to heaven, exclaimed "Disgraceful!" and flounced out of the room in a passion. Such was my Scotch marriage,—as lawful a ceremony, remember, as the finest family wedding at the largest parish church in all England.

An hour passed; and I had not yet summoned the cruel courage to communicate my real situation to Laura. The entry of the shock-headed servant-girl to lay the cloth, followed by Mrs. Baggs, who was never out of the way where eating and drinking appeared in prospect, helped me to rouse myself. I resolved to go out for a few minutes to reconnoitre, and make myself acquainted with any facilities for flight or hiding which the situation of the house might present. No doubt the Bow Street runner was lurking somewhere; but he must, as a matter of course, have heard, or informed himself of the orders I had given relating to our conveyance on to Edinburgh; and, in that case, I was still no more in danger of his avowing himself and capturing me, than I had been at any previous period of our journey.

"I am going out for a moment, love, to see about the chaise," said I to Laura.

She suddenly looked up at me, with an anxious searching expression. Was my face betraying anything of my real purpose? I hurried to the door before she could ask me a single question.

The front of the inn stood nearly in the middle of the principal street of the town. No chance of giving any one the slip in that direction; and no sign, either, of the Bow Street runner. I sauntered round with the most unconcerned manner I could assume, to the back of the house, by the inn-yard. A door in one part of it stood half-open. Inside was a bit of kitchen-garden, bounded by a

paling; beyond that some backs of detached houses; beyond them, again, a plot of weedy ground, a few wretched cottages, and the open, heathery moor. Good enough for running away, but terribly bad for hiding.

I returned disconsolately to the inn. Walking along the passage towards the staircase, I suddenly heard footsteps behind me—turned round, and saw the Bow Street runner (clothed again in his ordinary costume, and accompanied by two strange men) standing between me and the door.

"Sorry to stop you from going to Edinburgh, Mr. Softly," he said. "But you're wanted back at Barkingham. I've just found out what you have been travelling all the way to Scotland for; and I take you prisoner, as one of the coining gang. Take it easy, sir. I've got help, you see; and you can't throttle three men, whatever you may have done at Barkingham with one."

He handcuffed me as he spoke. Resistance was hopeless. I could only make an appeal to his mercy on Laura's account.

"Give me ten minutes," I said, "to break what has happened to my wife. We were only married an hour ago. If she knows this suddenly, it may be the death of her."

"You've led me a nice dance on a wrong scent," answered the runner, sulkily. "But I never was a hard man where women are concerned. Go up-stairs, and leave the door open, so that I can see in through it if I like. Hold your hat over your wrists, if you don't want her to see the handcuffs."

I ascended the first flight of stairs, and my heart gave a sudden bound as if it would burst. I stopped, speechless and helpless, at the sight of Laura standing alone on the landing. My first look at her face told me she had heard all that had passed in the passage. She passionately struck the hat with which I had been trying to hide the handcuffs out of my fingers, and caught me tightly round the neck, so tight that her grasp absolutely hurt me.

"I was afraid of something, Frank," she whispered. "I followed you a little way. I stopped here; I have heard everything. Don't let us be parted! I am stronger than you think me. I won't be frightened. I won't cry. I won't alter in any way, if that man will only take me with you!"

It is best for my sake, if not for the reader's, to hurry over the scene that followed. It ended with as little additional wretchedness as could be expected. The runner was resolute about keeping me handcuffed, and taking me back, without a moment's unnecessary waste of time, to Barkingham; but he relented on other points. Where he was obliged to order a private conveyance, there was no objection to Laura and Mrs. Baggs following it. Where we got into a coach, there was no harm in their hiring two inside places. I gave my watch, rings, and last guinea to

Laura, enjoining her, on no account, to let her box of jewels see the light until we could get proper advice on the best means of turning them to account. She listened to these and other directions with a calmness that astonished me.

"You shan't say, my dear, that your wife has helped to make you uneasy by so much as a word or a look," she whispered to me, as we left the inn.

And she kept the hard promise implied in that one short sentence throughout the journey. Once only did I see her lose her self-possession. At starting on our way south, Mrs. Baggs—taking the same incomprehensible personal offence at my misfortune which she had previously taken at the doctor's—upbraided me with my want of confidence in her, and declared that it was the main cause of all my present trouble. Laura turned on her as she was uttering the words with a look and a warning that silenced her in an instant:—

"If you say another syllable that isn't kind to him, you shall find your way back by yourself!"

The words may not seem of much importance to others; but I thought, as I overheard them, that they justified every sacrifice I had made for my wife's sake.

On our way back, I received from the runner some explanation of his apparently unaccountable proceedings in reference to myself. To go back to the beginning, it turned out that the first act of the officers, on their release from the work-room in the red-brick house, was to institute a careful search for papers in the doctor's study and bedroom. Among the other documents that he had not had time to destroy, was a letter to him from Laura, which they took from one of the pockets of his dressing-gown. Finding, from the report of the men who had followed the gig, that he had distanced all pursuit, and having therefore no direct clue to his whereabouts, they had been obliged to hunt after him in various directions, on pure speculation. Laura's letter to her father gave the address of the house at Crickgelly; and to this the runner repaired, on the chance of intercepting or discovering any communications which the doctor might make to his daughter, Screw being taken with the officer, to identify the young lady. After leaving the last coach, they posted to within a mile of Crickgelly, and then walked into the village, in order to excite no special attention, should the doctor be lurking in the neighbourhood. The runner had tried ineffectually to gain admission as a visitor at Zion Place. After having the door shut on him, he and Screw had watched the house and village, and had seen me approach Number Two. Their suspicions were directly excited.

Thus far, Screw had not recognised, nor even observed me; but he immediately iden-

tified me by my voice, while I was parleying with the stupid servant at the door. The runner, hearing who I was, reasonably enough concluded that I must be the recognised medium of communication between the Doctor and his daughter, especially when he found that I was admitted instantly after calling past the servant to some one inside the house. Leaving Screw on the watch, he went to the inn, discovered himself privately to the landlord, and made sure (in more ways than one, as I conjectured) of knowing when, and in what direction, I should leave Crickgelly. On finding that I was to leave it the next morning, with Laura and Mrs. Baggs, he immediately suspected that I was charged with the duty of taking the daughter to, or near, the place chosen for the father's retreat; and had therefore abstained from interfering prematurely with my movements. Knowing whither we were bound in the cart, he had ridden after us, well out of sight, with his countryman's disguise ready for use in the saddle-bags. Screw, in case of any mistakes or mystifications, being left behind on the watch at Crickgelly. The possibility that I might be running away with Laura had suggested itself to him; but he dismissed it as improbable, first when he saw that Mrs. Baggs accompanied us, and again, when, on nearing Scotland, he found that we did not take the road to Greta Green. He acknowledged, in conclusion, that he should have followed us to Edinburgh, or even to the continent itself, on the chance of our leading him to the Doctor's retreat, but for the servant-girl at the inn, who had listened outside the door while our brief marriage ceremony was proceeding, from whom, with great trouble and delay, he had extracted all the information he required. A further loss of half-an-hour's time had occurred while he was getting the necessary help to assist him, in the event of my resisting, or trying to give him the slip, in making me a prisoner. These small facts accounted for the hour's respite we had enjoyed at the inn, and terminated the runner's narrative of his own proceedings.

On arriving at our destination I was, of course, immediately taken to the gaol. Laura, by my advice, engaged a modest lodging in a suburb of Barkingham. In the days of the red-brick house, she had seldom been seen in the town, and she was not at all known by sight in the suburb. We arranged that she was to visit me as often as the authorities would let her. She had no companion, and wanted none. Mrs. Baggs, who had never forgiven the rebuke administered to her at the starting-point of our journey, left us at the close of it. Her leave-taking was dignified and pathetic. She kindly informed Laura that she wished her well, though she could not conscientiously look upon her as a lawful married woman; and she begged me (in case I got off) the next time I met with a respectable person who was kind to me to

profit by remembering my past errors, and to treat my next benefactress with more confidence than I had treated her.

My first business in the prison was to write to Mr. Batterbury. I had a magnificent case to present to him, this time. Although I believed myself, and had succeeded in persuading Laura, that I was sure of being recommended to mercy; it was not the less the fact, that I was charged with an offence still punishable by death, in the then barbarous state of the law. I delicately stated just enough of my case to make it vividly clear to the mind of Mr. Batterbury, that my affectionate sister's interest in the contingent reversion was now (unless Lady Malkinshaw perversely and suddenly expired) actually threatened by the Gallows! While calmly awaiting the answer, I was by no means without subjects to occupy my attention when Laura was not at the prison. There was my fellow-workman—Mill—(the first member of our society betrayed by Screw) to compare notes with; and there was a certain prisoner, who had been transported, and who had some very important and interesting particulars to communicate, relative to life and its chances in our felon-settlements at the Antipodes. I talked a great deal with this man; for I felt that his experience might be of the greatest possible benefit to me.

Mr. Batterbury's answer was speedy, short, and punctual. I had shattered his nervous system for ever, he wrote, but had only stimulated his devotion to my family, and his Christian readiness to look pityingly on my transgressions. He had engaged the leader of the circuit to defend me; and he would have come to see me, but for Mrs. Batterbury; who had implored him not to expose himself to agitation. Of Lady Malkinshaw the letter said nothing; but I afterwards discovered that she was then at Cheltenham, drinking the waters and playing whist in the rudest health and spirits.

It is a bold thing to say, but nothing will ever persuade me that Society has not a sneaking kindness for a Rogue. My father never had half the attention shown to him in his own house, which was shown to me in my prison. I have seen High Sheriffs, in the great world, whom my father went to see, give him two fingers—the High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire, came to see me, and shook hands cordially. Nobody ever wanted my father's autograph—dozens of people asked for mine. Nobody ever put my father's portrait in the frontispiece of a magazine, or described his personal appearance and manners with anxious elaboration, in the large type of a great newspaper—I enjoyed both these honours. Three official individuals politely begged me to be sure and make complaints if my position was not perfectly comfortable. No official individual ever troubled his head whether my father was comfortable

or not. When the day of my trial came, the court was thronged by my lovely countrywomen, who stood up panting in the crowd and crushing their beautiful dresses, rather than miss the pleasure of seeing the dear Rogue in the dock. When my father once stood on the lecturer's rostrum, and delivered his excellent discourse, called Medical Hints to Maids and Mothers on Tight Lacing and Teething, the benches were left empty by the ungrateful women of England; who were not in the slightest degree anxious to feast their eyes on the sight of a learned adviser and respectable man. If these facts led to one inevitable conclusion, it is not my fault. We Rogues are the spoilt children of Society. We may not be openly acknowledged as Pets, but we all know, by pleasant experience, that we are treated like them.

The trial was deeply affecting. My defence—or rather my barrister's—was the simple truth. It was impossible to overthrow the facts against us; so we honestly owned that I got into the scrape through love for Laura. My counsel turned this to the best possible sentimental account. He cried; the ladies cried; the jury cried; the judge cried; and Mr. Batterbury, who had desperately come to see the trial, and know the worst on the spot, sobbed with such prominent vehemence, that I believe him, to this day, to have greatly influenced the verdict. I was strongly recommended to mercy, and got off with fourteen years' transportation. The unfortunate Mill, who was tried after me, with a mere dry-eyed barrister to defend him, was hanged.

With the record of my sentence of transportation, my life as a Rogue ends, and my existence as a respectable man begins. I am sorry to say anything which may offend popular delusions on the subject of poetical justice, but this is strictly the truth.

My first anxiety was about my wife's future. Mr. Batterbury gave me no chance of asking his advice after the trial. The moment sentence had been pronounced, he allowed himself to be helped out of court in a melancholy state of prostration, and the next morning he left for London. I suspect he was afraid to face me, and nervously impatient, besides, to tell Annabella that he had saved the legacy again by another alarming sacrifice. My father and mother, to whom I had written on the subject of Laura, were no more to be depended on than Mr. Batterbury. My father, in answering my letter, told me that he conscientiously believed he had done enough in forgiving me for throwing away an excellent education, and disgracing a respectable name. He added that he had not allowed my letter for my mother to reach her, out of pitying regard for her broken health and spirits; and he ended by telling me (what was perhaps very true) that the wife of such a son as I had been, had no claim upon her father-in-law's protection and help. There was an end, then, of any hope of finding

resources for Laura among the members of my own family. The next thing was to discover a means of providing for her without assistance. I had formed a project for this, after meditating over my conversations with the returned transport in Barkingham gaol, and I had taken a reliable opinion on the chances of successfully executing my design from the solicitor who had prepared my defence.

Laura herself was so earnestly in favour of assisting in my experiment, that she declared she would prefer death to its abandonment. Accordingly, the necessary preliminaries were arranged; and, when we parted, it was some mitigation of our grief to know that there was a time appointed for meeting again. Laura was to lodge with a distant relative of her mother's in a suburb of London; was to concert measures with this relative on the best method of turning her jewels into money; and was to follow her convict husband to the Antipodes, under a feigned name, in three months' time. If my family had not abandoned me, I need not have thus left her to help herself. As it was, I had no choice. One consolation supported me at parting—she was in no danger of persecution from her father. A second letter from him had arrived at Crickgelly, and had been forwarded to the address I had left for it. It was dated Hamburg, and briefly told her to remain at Crickgelly, and expect fresh instructions, explanations, and a supply of money, as soon as he had settled the important business matters which had taken him abroad. His daughter answered the letter, telling him of her marriage, and giving him an address at a post-office to write to, if he chose to reply to her communication. There the matter rested.

What was I to do, on my side? Nothing but establish a reputation for mild behaviour. I began to manufacture a character for myself on the first days of our voyage out in the convict-ship; and I landed at the penal settlement with the reputation of being the meekest and most biddable of felonious mankind. After a short probationary experience of such low convict employments as lime-burning and road-mending, I was advanced to occupations more in harmony with my education. Whatever I did, I never neglected the first great obligation of making myself agreeable and amusing to everybody. My social reputation as a good fellow began to stand as high at one end of the world as ever it stood at the other. The months passed more quickly than I had dared to hope. The expiration of my first year of transportation was approaching, and already pleasant hints of my being soon assigned to private service began to reach my ears. This was the first of the many ends I was now working for; and the next pleasant realisation of my hopes that I had to expect, was the arrival of Laura.

She came a month later than I had anti-

cipated; but she came, safe and blooming, with upwards of five hundred pounds as the produce of her jewels, and with the old Crickgelly alias of Mrs. James, to prevent any suspicions of the connection between us. Her story (concocted by me before I left England) was, that she was a widow lady, who had come to settle in Australia, and make the most of her little property in the New World. One of the first things Mrs. James wanted was necessarily a trust-worthy servant, and she had to make her choice of one among the convicts of good character, to be assigned to private service. Being one of that honourable body myself at the time, it is needless to say that I was the fortunate man on whom Mrs. James's choice fell. The first situation I got in Australia was as servant to my own wife.

Laura made a very indulgent mistress. If she had been mischievously inclined, she might, by application at a magistrate, have had me flogged or set to work in chains on the roads, whenever I became idle or insubordinate, which happened occasionally. But, instead of complaining, the kind creature kissed and made much of her footman by stealth, after his day's work. She allowed him no female followers, and only employed one woman-servant occasionally, who was both old and ugly. The name of the footman was Dear in private and Francis in company; and when the widowed mistress, up-stairs, refused eligible offers of marriage (which was pretty often), the favoured domestic in the kitchen was always informed of it, and asked, with the sweetest humility, if he approved of the proceeding.

Not to dwell on this anomalous period of my existence, let me say briefly that my new position with my wife was of the greatest advantage in enabling me to direct in secret the profitable uses to which her little fortune was put. We began, in this way with an excellent speculation in cattle—buying them for shillings and selling them for pounds. With the profits thus obtained, we next tried our hands at houses—first buying in a small way, then boldly building, and letting again and selling to great advantage. While these speculations were in progress, my behaviour in my wife's service was so exemplary, and she gave me so excellent a character when the usual official inquiries were instituted, that I soon got the next privilege accorded to persons in my situation—a ticket-of-leave. By the time this had been again exchanged for a conditional pardon (which allowed me to go about where I pleased in Australia, and to trade in my own name like any unconvicted merchant) our house-property had increased enormously, our land had been sold for public buildings, and we had shares in the famous Emancipist's Bank, which produced quite a little income of themselves.

There was no need to keep the mask on any longer. I threw it off; went through the superfluous ceremony of a second marriage with Laura; took stores in the city; built a villa in the country; and here I am at this present moment of writing, a convict aristocrat—a prosperous, wealthy, highly respectable mercantile man, with two years of my sentence of transportation still to expire. I have a barouche and two bay horses, a coachman and page in neat liveries, three charming children, and a French governess, a boudoir and lady's-maid for my wife. She is as handsome as ever, but getting a little fat. So am I, as a worthy friend remarked when I recently appeared holding the plate, at our last charity sermon.

What would my surviving relatives and associates in England say, if they could see me now? I have heard of them at different times and through various channels. Lady Malkinshaw, after living to the verge of a hundred, and surviving all sorts of accidents, died quietly one afternoon, in her chair, with an empty dish before her, and without giving the slightest notice to anybody. Mr. Batterbury, having sacrificed so much to his wife's reversion, profited nothing by its falling in at last. His quarrels with my amiable sister—which took their rise from his interested charities towards me—ended in producing a separation. And, far from saving anything by Annabella's inheritance of her pin-money, he had a positive loss to put up with, in the shape of some hundreds extracted yearly from his income, as alimony to his uncongenial wife. He is said to make use of shocking language, whenever my name is mentioned, and to wish that he had been carried off by the yellow fever before he ever set eyes on the Softly family.

My father has retired from practice. He and my mother have gone to live in the country, near the mansion of the only marquis with whom my father was actually and personally acquainted in his professional days. The marquis asks him to dinner once a-year, and leaves a card for my mother before he returns to town for the season. The card is placed at the top of the basket on the drawing-room table, all the year round, and is supposed to be privately cleaned at intervals, so as to make it look as if it had been just left. They have a portrait of Lady Malkinshaw in the dining-room. In this way, my parents are ending their days contentedly. I can honestly say, that I am glad to hear it.

Doctor Knapton, when I last heard of him, was editing a newspaper in America. He had received several thrashings, had amassed a heap of dollars, and had, consequently, become one of the eminent journalists of the Great Republic. Old File, who shared his flight, still shares his fortunes, being publisher of his newspaper. Young File resumed coining operations in London; and, having braved his fate a second

time, threaded his way, in due course, up to the steps of the scaffold. Screw carries on the profitable trade of informer, in London. The dismal disappearance of Mill I have already recorded.

So much on the subject of my relatives and associates. On the subject of myself, I might still write on at considerable length. But, while the libellous title of "*A ROGUE'S LIFE*," stares me in the face at the top of the page, how can I, as a prosperous and respectable man, be expected to communicate any further autobiographical particulars, in this place, to a discerning public of readers?

TURKISH CONTRASTS.

TURKEY is rich to overflowing; the population meek in all the poverty of indolence. The loveliness of every landscape is broken by the most hideous public misery. The climate is fine, for the air is fresh and soft; the temperature generally moderate. It is bad, because it is both cold and wet, foggy and rainy.

The Turk proverbially loves his ease; yet he lives in the most inconvenient manner. He smokes his chibouque or nargilly on sofas without backs; he uses his knees for a writing-desk, and the floor for a dinner-table. He is fond of riding, and has no roads. He is fond of visiting his friends in state, but has no carriage: his streets are neither named nor numbered. Turks are both clean and dirty. They are always dabbling with water, but they eat with their hands; they heap intolerable garbage before their doors, leave dogs to do the office of scavengers, and allow dead carcases to putrefy beneath the windows of their palaces. They are both quick and slow in business, for they have few formalities; yet they have always got a score of opposing interests in everything. They neglect the most important affairs in endeavouring to satisfy everybody on some occasions, and jump at conclusions with a simplicity and good faith almost affecting, upon others.

The Turk's wives are so muffled up that they cannot see where they are walking; and they roll about like barrels, from the length of their dresses and the largeness of their shoes. He veils and imprisons; yet allows them to go where they please unaccompanied. Turks are never seen in public with their wives. On the one hand they appear to consider ladies as Nature's choicest handiwork; for they can imagine no present more grateful to the Sultan, on the great festival of the Bairam, than a young maiden. On the other hand, they deny women any place or influence in society; and, while they refuse them a soul, insist that they shall be transported bodily to paradise. In Turkey a girl seldom brings a portion to her husband; but the husband pays a sum of money to her parents. Turkish women are lively, gossiping, rest-

less: the men are calm, taciturn, and apathetic. A Turk considers it shameful to look at a lady passing him. He never suffers the name of a wife to pass his lips, and would consider it an insult if you asked after her health. Yet he is a polygamist, and has children by his slaves.

The Ottoman is compassionate and cruel. He will leave a legacy to a horse, and support an army of beggars; but he would roast a Christian with great zest, and bastinadoes his slaves without a qualm. He is at once splendid and mean. Ostentatious in servants, horses, pipe-sticks, and houses; but his servants are ill-dressed, his horses are worthless, his houses are kept in such bad repair that the rain often comes into his drawing-room, and pigeons build in the hall of audience of his sultans. He always reminds strangers of the Hungarian noblemen, who have but one spur. Nothing about him is complete. A saddle of cloth of gold will be girt about his steed with an old rope; and, while the mouthpiece of his pipe may be worth five hundred pounds, the bowl is not worth a halfpenny. He is a democrat, though he lives under a government nominally despotic. He is a democrat because he can hardly understand any real difference of ranks in a country where a whim of the prince has often made a minister of a coffee-boy or a water-carrier. Most governments are supposed to examine affairs with some view to their settlement; at the Porte they are usually investigated with a view of avoiding it. In other countries promotion is slow, and business is managed comparatively quickly. In Turkey business is conducted slowly, and promotion granted quickly. Elsewhere, thanks are usually returned for a present: in Turkey it is customary to thank the receiver. A guest invited to dinner is also thanked for coming.

In Turkey superiors salute inferiors: elsewhere the reverse is the fashion. In Europe we uncover our heads as a mark of respect; in Turkey people take off their shoes to show deference. A Turk is brief of speech, and seldom exaggerates; but he is amused by interminable stories, and the most improbable freaks of imagination. He suffers evils without complaint; because he says they are written on the book of fate, and he considers them as part of the scheme of Divine Providence. He has a great contempt for ancestry, and concedes to the descendant of Mahomet no other advantage in life than a green turban. He has even a stinging proverb always ready for those who claim merit on account of their forefathers; and tells them that they are like the dogs who prowl about tombs and live upon old bones. I wonder how a gentleman of their opinions would get on at a fashionable even-

ing party in Mammoth Street West (number 1 A), Brobdingnag Square?

A real Turk cares little for politics; most of the persons mixed up in public affairs in his country being Greeks or of Greek descent. He is brave and sensitive; but he never dreams of a duel, nor have the French been able to inoculate him with their entertaining ideas on this subject. I can recall no single instance of a Turk who has committed suicide. He will tell you, indeed, that the hour of his death is written, and that he can neither hasten nor retard it. Persons who are fond of theories usually recoil with instinctive prudence from all practical tests; and it never occurs to a theoretical Turk to try the soundness of his doctrine with a razor or a pocket-pistol. The conduct of the Turks in this respect may be therefore held up as a model for polite imitation. The police of Constantinople have much more to do with the Christians of Pera and Galata than with the Mussulmen of the whole adjoining city. Murder or robbery is rare in the Turkish quarter; elsewhere it is of daily occurrence. Indeed, the Turks are a great deal better than the institutions under which they have hitherto lived; and they are accustomed to say, with no less truth than good-humour, "We like our government best when it neglects us most."

I once asked a Turkish gentleman with whom I had the good fortune to be on terms of great intimacy, whether he did not admit that Mohammedanism was in itself opposed to what the Western Franks are pleased to call progress? His reply was just and spirited. He referred me at once to the splendid story of the Spanish Arabs, and enlarged with much dignity and good sense on the notorious fact that they were for some centuries perhaps the most learned and enlightened people in the world. The Egyptians and Syrians also, he added, not to mention the Persians, had at several periods of their history made notable advancement in science; but their government had been unfavourable, and they had necessarily retrograded. A Turk can hardly speak long without saying something quaint and sententious; so that I was not surprised when my friend, looking demurely at me, concluded thus: "Since, also, the Christians are often avaricious, selfish, intemperate, and unjust—qualities which, I am informed, are much condemned by your Sacred Writings—do you not think it possible that a Mohammedan of our age might take example from them, and 'break' through those precepts of the Koran which have been misinterpreted to counsel us an eternity of ignorance?"

I bowed my head at the ingenious reproof, and sought refuge in the cloud of smoke which our pipes charitably emitted.

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THE DALGETTY RACE.

WE cannot watch this wonderful world in its workings without being made sensible, every hour, of the system of—not so much reproduction—as re-occurrence. Men, events, diseases, wars, passions, combinations occur, lie dormant for centuries and then come on us again, identical. 'Twas a beautiful thought of the Italian rhymers, speaking of a great man,

Natura lo fece, e poi ruppe la stampa.

Nature made him, and then broke the die.

The die was broken in moulding Sheridan, as Byron has paraphrased it in his monody; but it is not so actually. The mould indeed is broken, crumbled, and is resolved to ashes; but the die remains; garnered up in Nature's storehouse, and it is taken down and cleaned, and turns out a type of the old stamp, when Wisdom requires it. The coinage in course of time becomes worn, battered, clipped, debased; it is called in; it will no longer pass current; but the matrices are kept in the great mint, and the mint issues broad, bright, brave pieces of the old coinage, from time to time, irregularly and unexpectedly.

Such issues are evoked partly, I admit, by the temper and constitution of the times. As insects come after a shower, and a dead carcass gathers ravens, and a house in Chancery fosters spiders; so, had we a weak bigoted priest-ridden sovereign, should we have a plentiful supply of the old king-cardinal coinage of the famous Wolsey, Richelieu, Mazarin, Alvarez, Ximenes pattern. With another Covenant we should have, I hope, another Cromwell; another Napoleon would bring with him another band of marshals as famous as the last; another Louis Quinze would assuredly provoke another Damiens; another Voltaire, another Robespierre in reversion; and I am sanguine enough to believe that a few years' continuance of the war in which we are at present engaged—pray Heaven, though, it be over by this time!—would give us another Nelson on the sea, another Wellington on the land, red tape, routine, my lords, and "under consideration," notwithstanding. After all (Solomon, the king of critics, has said it before), the theatre of the

world has not an unlimited repertoire. Darby and Joan was written before Catherine and Petruccio; Clytemnestra is older than Lady Macbeth. There can be no novelty in the drama of life but the last scene, and the rehearsal, even of that, is deferred till further notice.

I happened to mention casually the war. That brings me to the subject of this paper. Events, naturally including wars and the rumours thereof, do, according to my theory, turn up, from time to time, as scoriæ are thrown up when Vesuvius loses its temper. And the men-types turn up in like fashion. We have thought them dead; we have thought them extinct, we have thought that the breed has quite died out, like the ibis and the dodo; but they have been lying snugly perdu somewhere during times of desuetude, and now start up and cry "Ready, aye ready!" like any Napiers. Give me the event, I will find the men. There is, I am certain, a law-copying clerk somewhere in Cripplegate ready to cast aside his parchments; and, no longer mute inglorious, to write *Paradise Lost* or the *Defence of the People of England*, to the admiration of the world and the confusion of *Salmasius*, if you will only grant me a commonwealth and a high court of justice. I can find dozens of *Robespierres* in back attics ready to renounce pantaloons, to celebrate the Feast of Reason and to demand your head, my lud, to-morrow. There are communist cobblers in cellars who only lack the opportunity to be *Marats*; ay, and in quiet country towns there are dreamy young women who only wait the trumpet-call of the Event, to start up *Charlotte Cordays* and slay the *Marats* in their baths. If Charles the Second were alive to-morrow, do you think he would have much difficulty in finding a young lady among the corps de ballet willing and ready to be created *Duchess of Cleveland*? There is an old lady in Camden Town, housekeeper to a poor old gouty grand monarque of a single gentleman—give me but a real *Versailles* and a real *Louis Quatorze* in his dotage, and see how soon she would be metamorphosed into a real *Madame de Maintenon*! I know *Salomon de Caux* well. He has just discovered the perpetual motion, and only wants funds to complete his self-navigating aerial machine.

People say he is mad. Just leave the doors of the jewel-office open, and see how soon my acquaintance Colonel Blood (from Camberwell) will steal the regalia. All these types always exist. The *Causés Célèbres* are musty, decayed volumes; yet in peaceable English homesteads there are the same poisoners now. The Borgias are alive in gingham and corduroy; the aqua tofana is brewed in earthen mugs, and bought, in penn'orths, at the chemists; every burial club may have its Brinvilliers; every assurance office knows who killed Sir Thomas Overbury, and how Sir Theodosius Boughton's uncle insured his wife's sister's life for five thousand pounds.

The great event of the day—the war—has called into being a class of characters who, owing to the cankers of a calm world and a long peace, have gradually faded from public view, and have been superseded by younger sons of younger brothers, decayed tapsters, and reduced serving-men. Captain Dugald Dalgetty who since the last great peace has been annually sinking deeper and deeper into the stagnant waters of Lethe; who has gradually fallen into neglect, mis-estimate, obscurity, ridicule, and at length total oblivion; who seemed to have strutted and fretted his hour upon the stage till the impatient audience cried "Out! out (or "Off, off!"), brief candle!" has suddenly, *Belli gratiâ*, re-appeared blooming, confident, swaggering, loquacious, valiant, and venally faithful—with a new scabbard to his Andrea Ferrara, new rivets to his corselet, a fresh feather in his hat, new spurs to his heels, and a new saddle and bridle to his doughty steed Gustavus Adolphus. The war has called forth many things that have been slumbering for a quarter of a century in the limbo of peace-pipings. The passions of wild beasts, plunder, provost-marshals, and baggage-waggon Moll Flagons:—Bellona can boast of all these in her train; and with them rides proudly with his long sword ready to thrust for king or kaiser, autocrat or republic, stars or stripes, lion and unicorn or double eagle, Captain Dugald Dalgetty.

I can just recollect, nearly twenty years ago, one of the old Dalgetty stock, Captain Skanderbeggle. He lived next door to us, in a little cottage at Kilburn. He had but one leg; he had a potato snuff-box, given to him—so he said—by General Barclay de Tolly; and his principal occupation was to walk up and down his little garden, and swear. He is associated in my mind, curiously, with a certain tall sunflower in his garden that used to swagger insolently over our palings. Not that his face was yellow—it was excessively red. Not that his face had no better supporter than a stalk: for the captain's face ended in a shiny black stock, and was finished off by a tightly-buttoned blue surtout and nankeen trousers; but both the flower and the man were arrogant, blustering, self-asserting, swayed them-

selves to-and-fro a great deal, and had an unmistakeable expression of a resolve not to stand any nonsense. Captain Skanderbeggle was good enough to take considerable notice of, and rather a fancy to, me; but he would not stand any of my nonsense either, and, if I were inattentive to the terrific stories he told me, he would hit me a smart cuff on the side of the head, which I never dared resent or complain of to my nurse, for my ideas of the captain's coercive powers over refractory juveniles were illimitable. He was more than a threat of Bogey to me;—he was one of the Bogies themselves.

A martial life had the captain led. He was of West Indian parentage—from Demerara. "Married a Dutch widow, sir," he was wont to say; "fifty thousand guilders, and five hundred black fellows. Too much sangaree! Cut up with the yellow fever in six months. Click!" (This last interjection, "Click!" he always made use of as a peroration to his narratives, whether he had been describing a battle, a shipwreck, or a night surprise, the passage of a river, or the execution of a deserter.) Captain Skanderbeggle had received his baptism of fire in some bush-fighting among runaway slaves in the interior of Guiana. "Lay three days and nights in the mud up a creek. Took twenty-seven prisoners, hanged nine, gave the 'Spanso bocko' to eight, and flogged and pickled the rest. Took 'Ugly Toby' the ringleader. Brought his head home in a calabash. Promoted to be captain of militia on the spot. Governor Flemsburg sitting under a banyan tree smoking his pipe. Commission made out there and then. Click!" From the West Indies, the captain (he had always been a captain), having converted his fifty thousand guilders into the familiar ornithological specimen known as ducks and drakes, came to Europe, and appeared to have held some irregular military employment in Ireland during the rebellion in that unhappy country. He used to speak with great gusto of certain people called Croppies, and of the scourging, half-hanging, pitch-capping, and gunpowder-singeing, that were necessary to instil proper notions of loyalty and the Protestant religion into their minds; whence I infer that he had been in the Militia or the Yeomanry. Indeed, I think he once told me that he was adjutant in Lord Jocelyn's Fox-hunters; a corps that unearthed innumerable rebellious foxes (without brushes, and with but two legs) in those parlous times. But, as he was always desirous of employment in the regular army, he had solicited and obtained a commission in the King's German Legion, whence he had passed to Lord Beresford's Portuguese Levies, and thence to Sir Hudson Lowe's Corsican Rangers, during his service in which he had the pride and pleasure to put an end to a deadly Corsican vendetta that had been raging for upwards of eighteen months; for, happening

to catch one Camillo Zamboni, who with a long gun was waiting behind a rock for Pietro Pallavecco, him to kill and slay; and capturing soon afterwards the veritable Pietro, who with a long knife was lying in a ditch waiting for the long-gunned Camillo, and actuated by similarly murderous intentions towards him—he, the astute Skanderbeggle, after reading the first passage in the articles of war that turned up, did then and there hang both Pietro and Camillo on the next tree, to the complete extinction of the feud, and the satisfaction of all parties. There was rather a hiatus *valdè* defensius in the captain's narrative after this; and he never satisfactorily accounted for the tenure of his brevet-majority in the service of Murat, king of Naples, seeing that the brother-in-law of Napoleon was necessarily at war with us until 1814. How, too, could he have been at the battle of the Moskova as a captain of Polish Lancers; and how from thence did he subside into the Royal Waggon Train, attached to which he went through the campaign of Waterloo, and to his services in which he owed his modest pension? Stay: were there not evil-minded people who said that he had been broken as an officer in the English service, and that his pension accrued from certain delicate services he had been able, from his acquaintance with the Italian language, to render the English government at Milan, about the time of Queen Caroline's trial? He went over to South America after that, and had a brush in the war of Independence—on the Royalist Spanish side. They paid, he said, with a wink. In India, afterwards, the Nabob of Futtyghur was very much attached to him, and would have made him commandant of his artillery, had not the services of Skanderbeggle been essential for the organisation of the Rajah of Chillumghee's irregular cavalry. At last he grew old, and broke, and came to tell his battles o'er again and slay the slain thrice over at Kilburn. His sword was turned into a bamboo cane, and Gustavus Adolphus (represented by an old blind pony he used to drive in a gig) was put out to grass.

I am afraid Captain Skanderbeggle was a very good man, and I don't believe now half the stories he used to tell me of his exploits; but in my childhood I used to think him a very Paladin of valour. It struck me, even then, that he used to swear and drink brandy enough. I used to try (with that glorious privilege of childhood for the personification of shadows) to fancy him my uncle Toby. There was a stout landlady at the Black Lion opposite who would have made an admirable Widow Wadman, and our housemaid was as like Bridget as two peas; but the blustering old captain had nothing in common with the modest large-hearted Captain Shandy. Had poor Lieutenant Lefevre come that way, he might have stopped at the inn, or marched, or gone hang,

for ever Captain Skanderbeggle would have sent Corporal Trim to inquire how he did; indeed, he had no Trim, only a dusty old chairwoman to wait upon him, at whom he swore oaths enough to tire out the accusing angel's wings as he flew to Heaven's chancery to give them in, and blush—not for shame at a good man's weakness, but for indignation at an old sinner's profanity. He never made any model of the fortifications of Dendemon in the garden;—the only point in which he resembled the captains that fought in the Low Countries was in his swearing so terribly; but he used to hoist a flag on the anniversary of the capture of some stronghold in the East Indies (where he never was, I suspect), and smoke Trinchinopoly cheroots which he said the Rajah of Chillumghee had given him, and hallo out fiercely to the little vagrant boys, and behave altogether like a terrible old Turk. I am sure he was no great scholar; but if he had never read Suwarrow's Soldier's Catechism, he had at least heard, and to the full appreciated, the sapient maxim, that "Booty is a holy thing," for his house was a museum of trophies he had picked up in his wanderings—war-clubs, tomahawks, saddles, bridles, old coats, helmets, sabres, horse-cloths, and shakos. None of these were valuable—he was more a military marine store-keeper than a virtuoso; but he loved to accumulate things, and my friendship with him was brought to a close by a misunderstanding between him and my family, arising from the impossibility of persuading him to return a mallet and handsaw he had borrowed. He insulted us over the palings after this, and fired off two-pounders during the time of Divine Service on Sundays. Peace be with him!

There are not many readers of the rising generation who will recognise this offshoot from the Dalgetty tree. The death of George the Fourth saw the last of this captain; yet they abounded at the period to which I have alluded. If you consider the European nature of the last war, the many different powers with whom we were allied, the widely-various fields of our military operations, the Dalgetty of that day can be understood.

But there is, or rather was, a captain whom we all recollect. The captain in the Legion. He had big black whiskers (moustachios were not fashionable then, even among military men, save cavalry officers); his name was Captain de Montmorency Ravelin. He had shed his blood for the Queen Isabella Segunda and her exemplary mamma, Marie Christina, on the arid plains of Catalonia; and the ungrateful Isabella had neglected to imburse him his large arrears of pay-pension and allowances; which constrained him to get little bills done; to hold levees of Jews in his bed-chamber of a morning; to run up terrific scores at hotels; to occupy whole

pages to himself in tradesmen's ledgers ; to frequent occult chambers where ivory cubes were nightly rattled in cylindrical boxes, and seven was the main and five to four were on the caster ; to be put, in fine, to the thousand shifts and embarrassments that a pauper gentleman, utterly unemployed, thoroughly uneducated for any useful purpose, hopelessly idle, and passably debauched, must needs suffer when he cannot dig and when to beg he is ashamed. Yes ; he had formed one of the famous band of heroes recruited from the docks and the slums, and officered Heaven and the Insolvent Court only knows how, who went out to Spain, and were flogged and not paid, and, as wicked wags reported, once ran away en masse from a small body of Carlists, who were instructed to cry out "Stop thief!" which so terrified the worthy legionaries, that they, remembering the adage, "the thief doth fear each bush an officer," bolted without further delay. Who does not remember these poor fellows when they came home, all as tattered and torn as the bridegroom of the maiden all forlorn ? They begged about, they appeared at police offices, they swept the streets till the professional beggars found out what a capital dodge the legionary one was, and took to stumped brooms and ragged red jackets. Who does not recollect the unhappy captains—the De Montmorency Ravelins ? Every second-hand clothes-shop had one of their swallow-tailed scarlet-coats hanging up outside, with the Queen of Spain's buttons and the Queen of Spain's epaulettes. Some of the Ravelins were on the Carlist side, and were in worse case than the Christinos. They were the terror of tailors ; lodging-house keepers groaned when you mentioned their names ; waiters called them, sarcastically, "Capting." The Spanish legionary captain was almost as poorly off as a Pole ; and touching the degree of estimation in which those unfortunate refugees were held, from the year 'thirty-five to forty, I will relate what my aunt said. My aunt had a niece who was in love with a handsome young man, an artist, but whose name unfortunately ended in wowski. Marriage was spoken of, when up and spoke my aunt, who never before was heard to speak so harshly, and said :

"I hope, my dear, you are not going to marry anybody whose name ends in wowski, because he must be a Pole, and all Poles are swindlers."

And my aunt was a dear good woman, who would not have harmed a worm, or spoken disrespectfully of a Barbary monkey.

About this time, too, the stage took up the captain and made much sport of him. The playwrights converted him, invariably, into an Irishman, gave him a blue-frogged coat, brass spurs, white trousers, and false moustachios, one of which last came off towards the dénouement. He was always an intriguing

adventurer, had frequently been transported, ordinarily passed under a false name, and was generally removed in custody by a policeman, or kicked down-stairs by the footman at the end of the farce. Captain grew to be a bye-word and reproach. A bilker of taverns and victimiser of lodging-houses was a captain. The penny-a-liners revelled in him, and headed their reports, The Notorious Captain in Trouble ; Captain L—— Again ; A Certain Gallant Captain has been Repeating his Infamous Tricks in Hampshire ; and the like. The captain rivalled the penny-a-liner's other bread-provider ; the gallant, gay Lothario.

But, the captains grew so scarce at last that the farce-writers dropped them in contempt, and the penny-a-liners devoted themselves to Magyar noblemen. Some of the Ravelins went back to Spain, to find out coal-mines in the gorges of the Pyrenees. Some took commission agencies for Toboso's hams and the Duke of Garbanzo's sheries—like Captain Strong, whom Pendenis knew. Many went to America, where they went filibustering or beaver-trapping, and sometimes came back and published their Far Western Travels in three volumes, and sometimes fell by the hand of a Mexican hangman, like poor dear Raousset Boulbon. A few had shares in patents—machines for spinning flax from cobwebs, and extracting crimson dyes from egg-shells. One I knew went to California with a venture of lucifer-matches, Warren's blacking, digestive biscuits, and Somebody's pills : he is doing well. Gradually, imperceptibly, the Dalgetty type faded away. You no longer saw the captain's name in the provisional committee list of a bubble company. He was superseded by Professor Ravelin, Paracelsus Ravelin, M.D., Condorcet Ravelin, F.R.S. Count Von Swindelheim bilked hotel-keepers instead of the notorious Captain L——. Dalgetty became a myth. The thousand years of peace seemed to have set in, and Gustavus Adolphus was sold to the dogs'-meat man.

The revolution of eighteen hundred and forty-eight, attended as it was by prospects of a general European convulsion, stirred up some feeble sparks of the old Dalgetty element ; but, they were sparse and soon died out. Some remnants of the erst noble band of captains hurried over from the antipodes to see if there were any hard knocks going ; but the Unholy Alliance had the best of it, and the Dalgetties sank to sleep again, as Washington Irving tells us those ghostly Indian chiefs do in the haunted glens about Wolfert's Roost, who start from their slumbers when they hear some distant band carousing, echo back the shouts, and then fall once more into their trance of centuries, with their mouldering bows and arrows by their sides. There was nothing for Dugald Dalgetty to do in 'forty-eight. Mercenary as

he was, he was too real and true and noble for the miserable, skulking barricade fighting, and bombardment of blind alleys, and beleaguering of back parlours, and slaughtering in cellars.

Who is this comes riding on a white horse, all covered with crimson and golden trappings! Who comes riding so proudly and defiantly, has so firm a seat in the saddle, makes his charger curvet and prance so gracefully! He wears an embroidered caftan, his belt is full of silver-mounted pistols and arabesqued daggers; a jewelled yataghan is slung to his wrist, his head is swathed in a spangled turban, a muslin veil floats from it; glossy is his coal-black beard; he is followed by his cavasses and his pipe-bearer. Who is this Beyzadé, this son of an effendi, this scourge of the *giaour*? This is Nessim Bey, decorated with the order of the Medjidîé, by virtue of an imperial firman, colonel of the staff of the army of Anatolia. He may be a pacha soon and squeeze the rayahs; he receives tourists from Frangistan; and gives them coffee and chibouks. He is brave and merciless. No grass grows where his horse's feet have trodden. His jack-boots are terrible. None can look on his face, it is so radiant. No odalisques are so beautiful as his odalisques. He will be seraskier and marry the padisha's daughter. He will make terrible work of the Moscovs when he meets them, and there will be wailing at Nishni-Novgorod when he stands face to face with General Mouravieff. For this is Nessim Bey.

Yes, but this is also our old acquaintance, Captain Dugald Dalgetty, otherwise Washington Lafayette Bowie, of New York city, in the United States of America. The ardent Bowie has wearied of the puny exertitions of frontier warfare. He is tired of scalping Indians and making topographical surveys; he wants a wider field for his pugnacious predilections, and this is why his Highness the Sultan has one more colonel, and the Muscovites one more deadly foe. I should advise the Muchir Omar Pacha, however, to use, in the next war, a little more celerity in his movements, and come to blows with the enemy rather more frequently, than he was able to do lately; for Nessim Bey must have fire to eat, and heads to knock off. Otherwise, there may be found in the Russian hosts some day a Lieutenant-General Boviekoff; who will never be tired of slaying Turks; whose Christian names are Washington and Lafayette, and who also hails from New York city, United States.

Dalgetty's name is in a fair way to become legion. Do you see that general officer, surrounded by a brilliant staff, bedizened with stars and embroidery? He commands armies; he directs campaigns; he corresponds with princes; he takes the field against thousands. That general officer's name is Dal-

gettiowski. Fifteen months since he skulked about the purlieus of Soho, a wretched, proscribed, almost starving refugee. He dined for fourpence at a coffee-shop. He seldom washed. He vainly strove to eke out a livelihood by teaching mathematics. But, the good time has come, hard knocks are rife, and Dalgetty is triumphant.

Captain Sparkles, late of the Plungers, who lost his commission through that ugly chicken-hazard business with young Chawkey: Lieutenant Pluckbare, who was obliged to sell out to pay his debts; have found asylums and commissions in the Dromedary Contingent. Ravelin, who has come back from California with a few thousands, but is still fond of fighting, is trying hard for an appointment in the Osmanli Mounted Ostriches; and Captain Strong is thinking of giving up the Toboso's hams and sherry business, and accepting the post of quarter-master in the Anglo-Kamschatkan Legion.

What a pity that, just as all these honest fighting men have drawn their swords to carve their way to a little good fortune, there should be a tolerable certainty of PEACE! The world is their oyster, which they with sword will open; and, lo! the crafty diplomatists come and take away the mollusc (for the good of the entire world, though), and leave the noble race of Dalgetty but the shells!

AN ORDEAL.

IN SIX CHAPTERS. CHAPTER THE FIRST.

THE fire burnt cheerily, throwing a ruddy light over the walls of the little room, with its one or two prints in simple frames, its hanging bookshelf, and its ebony clock. The round-table was drawn close to the fire, and on it the tea-things glistened, and the lamp stood ready for lighting. Agnes Ross sat with her feet on the fender, knitting by fire-light, expecting, not waiting—he was always too punctual for that—to hear her brother's step outside, and the familiar click of his key in the street-door, as he let himself in. It was a London lodging, in one of those quiet streets that appear like the very strongholds of dreariness and discomfort; but, for all that, it was a home, and looked like a home, too, to the orphaned brother and sister.

That was his step! Agnes rose quickly, set on the kettle, and lit the lamp. Then, with an air of careful pride, she took from the mantleshaft a glass jar in which was a bouquet of glowing, beautiful, green-house flowers, rich with aromatic fragrance. It seemed strange on the table where she placed it, surrounded by the homely ware of the tea-service. The bunch of winter-violets, which she removed to make room for the others, had been far more appropriate. But Agnes' face shone as she looked on her floral treasures, and then watched for her brother's expression as he saw them.

He did see them, as he came into the room.

He paused—then shut the door—then smiled back in answer to his sister's delighted glance.

"Yes, Leonard. What do you think of this?"

She held them up, glass jar and all, for admiration. "Where do you think these came from?"

The young man did not answer at first. He took the flowers from her hand, looked at them, breathed in their fragrance for a minute, then put them down again. The flush of pleasure soon passed from his thoughtful face. He sat down, looking even grave.

"Who do you think brought them?" persisted Agnes, changing the form of question.

"I can guess," he answered. A very brief pause; then he added, "Miss Bellew has been to see you. She said she would. How do you like her?"

"Very, very much," cried Agnes, enthusiastically. "How beautiful she is, Leonard. You told me she was, but you did not say half enough. And so gentle, and kind, and sweet. I fancied she was proud."

"So she is," Leonard said quickly; "but with a pride too lofty to show itself to those below her in wealth and position." He moved to take from his sister's hands the kettle she was lifting. Tea-making engrossed her attention for a little while, but she soon returned to the former theme.

"She sat and talked; pleasant, friendly chat; for nearly an hour. I showed her my drawings, and yours, afterwards. She praised mine very much, but I think she would not venture to praise yours. I showed her our old house and the views all about, that you took."

"Little simpleton! To suppose every one as interested in the dear old place as ourselves."

"I am sure she was interested, Leonard. Of course, not as we are, but still very much. Is it likely she would not be, knowing you? Then I showed her your German drawings. She found out for herself that Swiss view hanging by the window, and liked it. Generally, I hate to hear people praise your drawings or yourself, even. But I would allow Miss Bellew to praise both."

"Gracious permission! Now, terrible autocrat, give me my tea. It is the bleakest of November nights, outside. In this cosy little nest we feel nothing of it. Cosy little nest: dear little bird in the nest."

But, in spite of his gay, loving tone, he seemed more than usually tired this evening. The dark hair fell carelessly, even rudely, over his forehead—the calm forehead that his little sister was so proud of. She smoothed away the vagrant locks; her cool fingers were very sweet, welcome visitants to his hot brow.

"Does your head ache, Leonard?"

"A little."

"And I have been chattering away so

thoughtlessly. Drink your tea, brother, and keep quiet. I will be as still as a mouse."

"No need, Agnes. I am only tired; that's all. It has been rather a busy day. Mr. Bellew had some involved accounts from a Dresden house, which I had to go through, because I know German. And—it was more fatiguing than reading Schiller."

"Yes, indeed!" Agnes said, seriously. She sat on her little chair; and, supporting her chin with her hand, gazed meditatively into the fire.

"But, for all that, it was pleasant enough;" pursued Leonard, cheerfully—"pleasant to be able to render a special service to my master."

"Your master!" Scornfully curled the red lip. But the pride of even a good woman often flies nearer the ground than that of a good man. Leonard smiled.

"Do not disown the word, nor the fact, my birdie. It is no shame to be a servant—or a servant I should not be."

Agnes broke forth anew with earnestness, even to tears.

"O Leonard! Don't be angry: I mean, don't be vexed with me for feeling; feeling it so hard that I should be the cause of all."

"The cause of all? Of what?"

"Of your being in this position. If it had not been for me, you would have gone to India, as our uncle wished; and you would have made your fortune, and come back to England while you were young; and you would have married, and been happy."

She stopped at length her rapid, passionate utterance. Leonard then spoke gently.

"Happy! My little sister, what is it that you call happiness?"

"O, I know—I know, with you duty is always happiness."

"Not always; not often, I am afraid, to this restless, erring humanity which is so strong within all of us. But, Agnes, there was no war between duty and inclination in my case. If it had not been simply right to stay at home, and be a brother otherwise than in name to my sister, I might have done it from pure selfishness. Next spring, you know, when I lose my little sister, I may yet go to India."

"O Leonard!"

"O Agnes!" He laughed at her the pleasant laugh of one who loves too truly to be less than tender over the foibles of the beloved. "All this time, while you are eloquent and unreasonable, my tea is getting cold, and so is yours."

Agnes turned slowly round to the tea-table. Her face, in its intent thoughtfulness, looked like her brother's for the time, though she was a youthful-hearted woman of four-and-twenty, and he a man of thirty; old-looking for his years.

"But, for all that"—she again plunged into the forbidden subject—"I am not convinced, brother."

"Not convinced of what?"

"That you would not have been happier, making your way abroad. It was such a prospect!"

"Spoken like a man of business. But life has other phases than commerce. I was never meant to be a homeless seeker for fortune. I crave more nourishment for heart and mind. As for riches and luxury, I want none of them. I never used to wish for them: I never will!"

His tone grew determined. Agnes looked up surprised, but more persuaded.

"And you are really happy here, and thus?"

"Happier than I could be anywhere else in the wide world," he answered, with a fervour that sent the colour to his cheek, the light to his eyes. His sister looked up into his face, and was satisfied.

The table cleared, Agnes was soon at work. But before Leonard unclosed Shakespeare to finish the Tempest, commenced the previous evening, the girlish, busy tongue began again on the fruitful theme with which their evening talk had commenced.

"Brother, Miss Bellew invited me to go and see her."

"Did she? Very naturally."

"What sort of a house is it?"

"Their villa is a perfect palace of taste and luxury. You were never in such a grand house in your life, Agnes. Mr. Bellew is one of our merchant princes, you know. He likes magnificence, and his house——"

"It is about Mr. Bellew I want to know, not his house. Is he a nice man?"

"Nice is such a young lady's word, I am afraid of venturing in its way. He is a handsome old man, to begin with. His face expresses the qualities I have always found in him—honour, integrity, straightforward truthfulness, perseverance, pride, and inflexible, inexorable will."

"I know what he is like, very well. Is Miss Bellew an only child?"

"She has a brother; a boy of fourteen; and two little sisters, born when her mother died."

"And she is a mother to them?"

"Almost," said Leonard, temperately. "She is very good—very loving and tender over them. Her mother left them in her charge. She fulfils it sacredly."

"And they all love her dearly?"

"I believe so: the little girls do, at least. Master Alfred is, I should think, rather difficult to deal with. His father has spoiled him ever since he was born."

"And neglects—or at least, thinks little of his daughters?"

"Not so fast. Rosamond, Miss Bellew is the very apple of her father's eye."

"Is she?" said Agnes, thoughtfully.

Leonard opened his book, and began turning over the pages.

"And her name is Rosamond," she pursued,

still musing, her work lying idle in her lap.

"Rosa mundi, Rose of the world."

"Even so," said Leonard, gently, "Rose of the World." He repeated the words softly, dreamily, as he turned over more pages, and finally settled his volume and himself for reading. Then his voice became cadenced to a clear and equable music, as he began:

There be some sports are painful; but their labour
Delight in them sets off.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

A WEEK afterwards, Agnes went to spend the day with Miss Bellew. It was looked forward to, thought about, counted upon. It proved one of those rare occasions when the anticipated pleasure falls even short of its reality. At least, so Agnes thought; when, after a long day that had seemed short, of talk and music books and work, she and Miss Bellew and the children sat at evening in the drawing-room, with Mr. Bellew asleep in his armchair. The two little girls were at their sister's feet, absorbed in a fairy tale. Master Alfred was equally well amused by some boyish piece of science which his father had brought him that evening. Rosamond and Agnes sat side by side on the sofa. The night was bleak; rain falling, and gusts of wind sobbing, which reached their ears even in their curtained and cushioned splendour of ease.

"My brother will be here soon," said Agnes.

"Yes. It is a wild night for him to come so far."

"O! he does not mind wild weather. He even likes it. At home, he often used to go out in the midst of storm and wind, to help the fishermen draw up their boats on the shore. Once he went out in a little boat to save the people out of a wreck."

"Did he?"

A silence. Curiously enough, this theme of Leonard was a new one between the two girls, although to one of them at least, of ever-present interest.

"You must have loved your home very much," said Miss Bellew presently.

"We did—especially Leonard. He looked as I never saw him look before nor since, when we drove away from the gate of our house, and through the village. It was such a happy home. Perhaps, one day we may yet have it again."

"You and your brother?"

"Yes; or Leonard, at least. I know he hopes for it, thinks of it, determines——"

But here Agnes stopped, suddenly conscious how unwittingly confidential she had become with her new friend. She looked up, and Rosamond's eyes met her own. Miss Bellew's was a face that looked too proud for a woman's, until she smiled or spoke; then the curves of her mouth relaxed into a graciousness that made her whole countenance radiant and beautiful.

Now the face was softened into absolute sweetness. Agnes thought it so lovely at that moment, she could not choose but look at it; she could not choose but feel it familiar, and her confidence no longer seemed unnatural. Nevertheless, she paused.

"You are not afraid of talking to me?" said Rosamond, simply. "Tell me more of your old home. I know you must like to talk of it, and I like to listen."

And so Agnes went on talking, and Rosamond listened.

It was natural that the sister should insensibly slide back to the subject of her brother. Agnes found herself telling Miss Bellew of all the circumstances of their position. True, none needed to be kept secret, and most of them Rosamond might already have learned from her father. Perhaps, she had. However that might be, she kept very still, while Agnes told her how the failure of a bank soon after their father's death had ruined them, and how at first Leonard had tried to support his mother and sister in their old home by teaching in the neighbourhood.

"But our mother died; and, soon after, an old friend of my father's offered Leonard employment in translating, if he would come and live in London. So we left the old place, and went to live in London lodgings.

"It must have been a sad change."

"In many respects it was. And then our rich uncle Fellows wrote to offer Leonard a share in some great Indian concern of his. He had been unfriendly with the family for years, but now he wrote. And when Leonard declined, he sent back an angry letter, renouncing all connection with him for ever."

"Your brother declined?"

"Yes. Shall I tell you why? You guess—he would not leave me. We two were alone in the world then. I feel ungrateful sometimes."

She paused, blushing.

"Perhaps, when I am married, Leonard may go——"

"To India?"

"Yes. I often fancy he thinks of it. If it had not been for me, he might have made his fortune there by this time. His useless, troublesome sister, who now, after all, will leave him!" sighed Agnes, with a pensive look in her brown eyes.

"You are to be married, then? Soon?"

"In the spring, when his ship is expected home. He is a sailor," added she, with a girlish flush and a rapid glance at her companion.

"Is he? And will he have to go to sea again after you are married—to leave you?"

"No, indeed. I shall go with him, wherever he goes. No need—no right—no reason that I should ever leave him when I am his wife!" cried Agnes. "That is the happiness!"

Again she paused, with a bright blush. Again Rosamond's eyes perused her face with a kind of tender exultation in what she read there. Her lips parted, as if to speak, but she checked the impulse, and sat mute; her head a little drooped, her hands lightly clasped upon her lap—musing, most likely.

Leonard's eyes first fell on that fair picture as he entered the room; for the door opened noiselessly—as all doors were educated to do in that house—and he stood before them before they were aware. Both the girls started: both blushed. Agnes smiled gladly on seeing her brother. Rosamond moved away to awaken her father.

Mr. Bellew became conversational. The children were summoned to bed, and tea-time arrived.

Rosamond presided over the tea-table. It was pleasant to see her at its duties, all the surrounding appointments being, after their several ways, in graceful, delicate, and refined harmony with herself. She said little, even to Agnes, who sat by her side. She appeared entirely intent on the office before her: only an occasional lighting up of the dark eyes, a radiant flow of colour to the transparent cheek betrayed that she listened to the animated discourse between the two gentlemen. Mr. Bellew liked talking with his clerk; he was too clever himself not to value intellect in another; and it was not the first agreeable evening he had owed to the society of Leonard Ross. The old gentleman was intelligent, cultivated, in a certain sense, and sagacious. All his most genial characteristics came out on such occasions. He paid studious little courtesies to Agnes; he was kind and friendly beyond kindness to Leonard. As he leaned back in his velvet chair, his fine head with its white hair, his clear blue eyes, his well-cut features, made a pleasant picture of flourishing old age. All the harsher points were lost, which sometimes made his hale countenance stern and hard of aspect, even to cruelty.

Agnes had thought of him even with affection; and of Rosamond her appreciation had been warm even to enthusiasm. "Had been," for things were changing now, and the joy of the time seemed slipping away from Leonard's sister. The graceful luxury of the surroundings satisfied her taste; attracted her fancy, as before. Rosamond sat fair and brilliant, like a star shining in the midst of a cloud, or a diamond set in snow—as Agnes had been thinking to herself. Leonard was there, too. All was warmth: glowing, generous, cordial warmth. Yet Agnes felt chilled, and was no longer at peace.

The evening went by, and the time of departure drew near. Rosamond took Agnes to her room. That exquisite little dressing-room had delighted Agnes a few hours before. The rose-pink hangings; the mirrors

with their marble consoles ; the statuettes, and pictures, and flowers, and porcelain ; the birds in their cages ; the jewels and trinkets ; the rare and costly trifles tossed lavishly about—all this had pleased simple Agnes to see. Now, she marked the incongruity of her own homely bonnet and cloak as they lay on the embroidered couch. Also, for the first time, she noted the contrast between herself and her hostess as they were both reflected in one of the long glasses.

Rosamond took her hand.

"Let us be friends," she said, with a certain hesitating timidity, very unusual to Miss Bellew.

A little while before Agnes would have responded warmly, lovingly. Now, instinctively she shrunk back. But her next impulse forbade her to risk the chance of giving pain.

"I hope so," she answered with gentleness.

Rosamond kissed her, and she returned the kiss.

Down the soft-carpeted staircase into the chastened glow of the drawing-room again, with its purple and its gold, and its grandeur that was lost in the refinement and grace that reigned over all. Good night to the courtly, white-haired gentleman who stood by the hearth ; good night to the queen of the palace—the fairy of the enchanted castle—the lily of the beautiful garden. Rosamond looked like all these as she gave her hand, first to Agnes, then to Leonard. He touched it ; glanced, not looked, into her face, and turned to answer some casual inquiry of Mr. Bellew. The bell rang, the servant waited ; the brother and sister descended the staircase. At its foot they were arrested by Rosamond's voice.

"Stay, Miss Ross ! Agnes ! you have forgotten your flowers."

She came flying down to them, holding the beautiful camellias and geraniums clasped to her breast. Leonard stood nearest to her ; and, before his will could rise to control it, his impulse—passionate, imperious, overwhelming—had commanded him to stretch out his hand. He took the flowers. He looked at her ; and, for a single instant, she looked at him.

There was no second good night. Agnes twined her arm within her brother's. They were out in the cold, blank, silent night.

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

THE brother and sister walked rapidly. The rain had ceased, but a damp mist hung over everything. The houses looked like great, gaunt shadows ; the street-lamps flared with a sickly, lurid light ; the park they had to cross was a dreary wilderness, haunted with strange shapes ; for tree and gate and fence looked ghostly in the vaporous air. Agnes shivered : her brother drew her closer to his side.

"Are you cold ?" he asked anxiously.

They were the first words he had spoken since they left the house.

"No ; not cold."

A pause.

"You have had a pleasant day ?"

"It was very pleasant."

Another silence.

"How sweet these flowers are !"

Agnes caught them from his hand.

"I should like to throw them away !" she said, passionately.

Leonard gently reclaimed them, saying nothing. He did not inquire the reason of his sister's sudden emotion ; although it had left her trembling ; and, once or twice, a brief strong sob escaped from her. He said nothing.

The narrow, dismal street was reached at last. They re-entered their home. The fire shone with a subdued glow ; two or three books lay on the table, Agnes' work-basket, and the glass of flowers. Leonard lit the lamp, his sister sat on the little sofa, and took up a letter which had arrived in their absence. But he only handled it mechanically ; looked at it with eyes whose vision seemed introverted. A strange expression was on his face ; such as even his sister had never seen there before. It was not the look she had expected—had dreaded to see. That she could have interpreted ; but this was in a language of which she held no key. He took up the glowing flowers he had brought with him, he regarded them long with deep, thoughtful eyes. Agnes sprang to him.

"O ! put them away—put them away !"

He looked into her face. Her pleading, anguished look forced down the calm front with which he strove to meet it. So he only took her in his arms, and gently pressed her head against his shoulder, blinding the entreating eyes that saw too much. Presently, in a quiet voice, he said,—

"Yes, Agnes. I will put them away."

In a changed tone, presently, he added :

"You are tired, and it is late. We will not sit up longer."

"O ! brother, brother ! you are cruel to me."

"Am I ? Do I pain you—have I pained you, my poor birdie ?"

"Is it no pain to see you suffering ; to know you miserable ; and to be told no more ?" she cried with the vehemence of her quick, impatient nature.

He did not answer.

"I thought I knew my brother's heart," she went on, "even as he knew mine. But I was wrong—wrong. From the time we were little children I thought we had shared every trouble, every difficulty, every trial. I was proud, glad to think it. But you have been in sorrow and I never knew ; you are unhappy now, and you try to put me off with vague words."

"Agnes ! You are not right in this re-

proach. The confidence you claim ought not to have been yours. Simple honesty would have held me dumb, if other feelings had been insufficient. I had no right to indulge in the luxury of sympathy. I will not have it now. I do not need it. Miserable I have not been: for I have done no wrong. No, sister, nor will I do wrong,"—he pushed her gently from him—his colour rose, his voice took a new tone,—“although I love her! I love her!” he said, “with all my strength; with all the yearning of my soul; although I am the one who loves her and will love her truest—deepest—best; although all the world love her too.”

He stopped abruptly, seated himself and shaded his face with his hand.

“You have heard,” he said, almost sternly; “you have your wish now. You know your brother’s heart. If I hid it from you before it was not from shame. I am not ashamed of loving Rosamond Bellow. I will carry my love for her, with my hope of heaven, to the grave; pure and spotless, God helping me. And the life He gave me shall not be less worthy, even if it be less happy, because of the love.”

“Oh, brother, brother!” Agnes sobbed, clinging round his neck, “I cannot bear it; I, that am so happy, to see you suffer.”

“My child, I know it is hard,” he said, tenderly; “God bless you for the love that makes it so.”

“Every day, every time you see her, that you go there”——

“I know. Therefore, when my little bird leaves me for her own happy nest, next spring I shall go.”

“Where?”

“Abroad somewhere. I shall easily settle where. In the meantime, I shall not go there again.” His glance unconsciously caught the flowers that lay near him for a single instant. He rose resolutely.

“Now, remember, no word henceforward.” He kissed her fondly, then led her gently, but irresistibly, to the door.

“You must go to bed now. Good night, sister.”

“Good night, brother.” But she lingered yet a few minutes,—then she went.

Left alone, Leonard Ross stood beside the fire-place, leaning his head against the high mantelpiece. His hands clasped themselves together very tightly; the one instinctive, unconscious demonstration of rending pain.

It was a new pain, and one so mingled with sweetness, that it defied him to put it away. For a brief space he had tasted of a joy most exquisite;—for once at least his life had risen to full tide, and joy had crowned it with a crest of light. There is no man who loves, and sees for the first time, the answering electric look, which at a flash shows him a new world radiant and glorious; into which he alone may enter; over which he alone holds sovereignty;—there is no man, beholding this, but would feel the rapture of the

new joy. Leonard had tasted of the ecstasy: now came the recoil. The gate of the dream-land had closed upon him, and he stood in the cold, grey, outside world again.

In that grey reality, truths now made themselves harshly felt. That he was not alone in this love; that it was requited; soon ceased to be a thought of sweetness: it aggravated to torture, it lashed even to fierceness. For the first time the cry of his soul was, “It is more than I can bear.”

Such strife, such struggle it is for no earthly hand to record. Let no man be ashamed if, in his calmer latter days, he look back to some such episode in his early life. Over it, be sure, angel eyes have watched, with divine compassion for the suffering, divine exaltation in the victory.

In the morning Agnes came down, with looks well tutored into cheerfulness. Her brother stood by the window, an open letter in his hand. He was very pale, she thought to herself. He kissed her as usual, then held her hand still.

“Agnes,” said he, in a low voice, “I have only now just opened this letter.”

“It was here last night. Oh, Leonard, no bad news?”

“Uncle Fellowes is dead.”

“Dead—Uncle Fellowes!” A sudden flash of thought made her heart beat quickly, almost to suffocation. She looked up in her brother’s face.

“There is no will, and I am the heir at law.”

CHIPS.

A PERPLEXING PARENTHESIS.

I HAVE had the misfortune to have a sum of money left to me by a will which has been drawn by an illogical (for I won’t say roguish) lawyer; who has inserted a parenthesis in the most inconsiderate manner, in the very heart of the most important paragraph, totally at variance with the context, and only calculated to create heart-burnings and fees.

The bequest is made to three families; and the only matter in dispute is, whether one of the third shares should be divided. I wished the Lord Chancellor, or one of the Vice Chancellors as an authority on the subject, to give me his reading of the passage in question, and the consequence is that I am driven to the verge of insanity. Without there being the slightest question as to pedigree involved in the matter, I am required to produce somebody who knew my grandmother before her marriage, seventy years ago; who knew when she was married, and where she was married, and whom she married; and who must swear in the most determined and awful manner that she had four children, and no more and no less,

and so on, and so on. Of course there are writings produced, and marked with all the letters in the alphabet, from A to Z inclusive, attached to this swearing, which would have perplexed the Sphinx, and which are calculated to cause octogenarian witnesses to cast their spectacles into the dust, in despair. Of course there is the difficulty of persuading anybody of eighty that mere signing his or her name to an affidavit and kissing the New Testament at two and sixpence a time, is such a harmless and common proceeding as the Court of Chancery insists that it is.

But this is not all. I find that, before I can get the Court of Chancery to give me the proper reading of this disputed passage—about two lines—every person who is named, or can be constructively supposed to be interested, in the will, must be not only before the Court, but that each of these persons must prove everybody else's case and his or her own too. The family of A, for instance, come before the Court, and bring all those parties with them, who could by any possibility have any claim to the money. The family of B come before the Court and bring with them all those parties who could by any possibility have any claim to the money. The family of C (which unfortunately is my family) then come before the Court, and bring with them all those parties (of course including all the parties who have been already brought by A and B) before the Court, who could by any possibility have any claim to the money; and, nothing effectual can be done until all of us, like the clowns in all the pantomimes that were ever acted (including the clowns who have tumbled into Chancery), can say of their own motion, "Here we are!"

We are not very great enemies to each other, many of us have never heard of one another before, although we know all about each other's pedigrees as well as most families do; yet the High Court of Chancery insists in the most emphatic way, that we shall keep on pelting each other with affidavits about them. The frequency with which I, for instance, have sworn, and the half-crowns I have paid, since I came before the Court, are something awful to think of. And after all, we are no nearer the grand consummation:—that of getting a plain construction put upon the villanous parenthesis by some one in authority.

Whether we are not all before the Court, or whether there are too many of us before the Court (which I think the more likely), I do not know; but we do not get on.

I merely wish to inform the world that I am before the Court; that, if ever I should get behind it or out of it, I shall lay the fact to heart and rejoice. I should then be glad to bring myself forward as an instance of anybody having ever got out of

Chancery within a reasonable time; and, if I do, the public shall hear of it, the editor of this journal being willing.

A LONDON PARISH.

In a recent number we described a Home for the Homeless in Playhouse Yard, near Cripplegate. As a pendant to that description we now present our readers with a brief notice of the parish in which it stands:—St. Thomas Charterhouse. We are indebted for it to the Reverend William Rogers, its incumbent.

The district is contained in an area of seventeen acres, or eighty-two thousand two hundred and eighty square yards, and the length of the boundary line is one mile, less one hundred and fifty-four yards. Every better description of house has been scrupulously cut out by the original apportioners of the district, who have zigzagged the boundary line in a most extraordinary and unnecessary manner, in order to accomplish their object, and who have finally concluded by leaving it a net-work of the very lowest description of courts and alleys, forty-four of which are blind, the open ones leading one out of another, and eventually debouching in Whitecross Street and Goswell Street. Some idea of the poverty of the district may be formed from the following facts:—There are nine thousand five hundred persons contained in one thousand one hundred and seventy-eight houses, the total rental of the district being fourteen thousand six hundred and sixty pounds, or about twelve pounds per house.

Many of these houses are mere kennels, such as my friends in the country would not for a moment allow their dogs to inhabit, and which her Majesty's pigs, which I had the honour to visit at Windsor, would not even deign to look upon. In any other district, these would long ago have been condemned by the surveyor; but here, like every other abomination, they are suffered to exist. Now and then, at cholera time, perhaps, a stir is made, and one or two are pulled down and offered up as a sacrifice to appease the tardily excited wrath of the Paving Board, whose bowels of compassion have been hardened by a letter from the Home Office,—and then all is over. This is a most extraordinary movement; generally a little external whitewashing is deemed quite sufficient, and the authorities are satisfied.

Some of the houses, however, are not without pretensions, and bear evident traces of having been occupied by a very superior class of inhabitants. Indeed, even Golden Lane has its classic reminiscences. One of the houses is called the Palace—(remarkable to say, it is not a gin palace)—and bears the royal arms emblazoned upon its front. The legend of the lane is, that this was Queen Elizabeth's nursery, and though I have not been able to trace the legend to its source, still the names of some of the localities carry us back to the days of the good Queen Bess. There is Bear and Ragged Staff Yard, doubtless so called from the arms of the Earl of Leicester; and Playhouse Yard, where Alleyne's theatre, the Fortune, stood. This is now the property of Dulwich College; and is described in the letters patent from James the First to Edward Alleyne as "all those messuages, lande, tenement, gardens, hereditamente, and buildinge of our said servante, Edward Alleyne, called or known by the name of the Fortune, situate and being in Whitecross Street, Golden Lane, in that parte of the parishe of Sainte Gyles without Creppelgate, London, which is within the county of Middlesex." Whether this district was

the Belgravia of the Elizabethan period, and these tenements answered to the Buckingham Palace, the Stafford House, and the Opera of the present century, I cannot tell; the numerous retainers of Leicester have long since disappeared, though they have left the Bears and a very considerable Ragged Staff behind them; and the only records of Alleyne's Shakespearian talents that remain are the Othellos which are hung up at the doors of the dealers in marine stores.

RENT DAY ROUND MADRAS.

WILKIE'S Rent Day is a picture that suggests a British union of business and enjoyment; carving of beef here; counting of money there. In the Madras Presidency there is a picture of our Indian Rent Day, more striking than pleasant, which belongs to the whole presidency, and is to be seen anywhere but in Madras itself. It is a native picture, say the Europeans, who decline to look at it; but we think it may boast—ugly as it is—of being exhibited in sort, under the patronage of the East India Company, as we shall show. The picture itself is so much worse than Wilkie's, as being more disgusting than pleasant. Let its horrors appear incidentally in the course of the brief criticism, upon which we are about to enter. A full sketch of it may be referred to by one who has a taste for diablerie in the Report of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the alleged cases of Torture in the Madras Presidency. Three eminent Indian lawyers are the reporting gentlemen.

Indifferent as we are in England about Indian affairs, there are few who do not know that more than one-half of the entire revenue of that vast empire consists of a land-tax or rent, which is exacted from the occupiers by the government, as it had been exacted from time immemorial by the various native dynasties which preceded us in the supreme authority. The system of tenure differs in the several presidencies; in some of which a superior class, called zemindars, or proprietors, hold direct from the government, and sublet the land to the agent or occupier; while in others, the intermediate grade of zemindar is unknown, the ryots themselves holding immediately under the government. Of both these forms of tenure there are many local varieties, but this general distinction between them is sufficient to render perfectly intelligible the condition of the land question in Madras, in which presidency the ryotwarry system exclusively prevails.

In Madras, therefore, the Honourable Company is not only the head landlord; but the sole landlord. No proprietor, no middleman, no intermediate grade whatever interposes between the actual cultivator of the soil and the great company which is at once his seigneur and his sovereign. The Honourable Company itself lets the land, fixes the rent, raises or lowers the rent, and collects

the rent. It does not even farm out the collection to certain great contractors (as was formerly done for the various departments of the revenue), leaving to these contractors the responsibility of employing in the business of collection whatever class of agents and whatever form of machinery they may deem expedient. For the purpose of rent-getting the presidency is divided into a number of pleasant little districts, each comprising some three or four thousand square miles and containing from half a million to a million of inhabitants; and over each of these is placed a British head-collector, who, besides making his own fortune within the limited time, during which a European constitution can remain proof against the climate, is expected to supervise the collection of the entire revenue of the district, whether from land-tax, water-tax, or the licences to practise the various trades or callings which form the several sources of the Honourable Company's revenue. To assist him in this duty a large staff of tahsildars, mouigars, curnoms, duffadars, peons, taliaries, and other nondescript native officials of high and low degree, is spread through the several villages of the district—but, as this native staff is described by unexceptionable witnesses, as little better than a delusion, as the bane and pest of society, and as banded together, from the highest to the lowest, for the common purpose of extorting illicit gains, and of mutual protection from discovery—it may be doubted, whether on the whole, their services are precisely such as if we were very particular as to the interests of the parties concerned, we should desire to see employed in the collection of public money, or in the delicate negotiations between the Honourable East India Company and the miserable defaulters in the land-tax. Connected with this department, there is also another Indian institution, which may seem a little harsh to English readers. We at home should object if the collector of income-tax, poor-rate, or county-rate were empowered to proceed summarily, by his own authority; and, without the interposition of a magistrate, or of any civil process whatsoever, to arrest the person of the defaulter. Even in India itself, bad as things were, this used to be unlawful. But the Honourable Company is strict in money matters; and, by an enactment, now about forty years old, all authority, whether of the revenue, the police, or the magistracy, is vested in the same set of officials—those very gentlemen who are declared thieves by their friends.

Rent-day, then, round Madras is not like Rent-day in Great Britain. The rents which are there collected are not the rents of a mere private proprietor, but of the Honourable Company itself. The officials who figure on the Indian scene are not the steward, or bailiff, of some great estates in the Highlands, or in Connemara; they are every

one of them the chosen and salaried servants of that great public body which represents England in India, and for every one of whose doings the good name of England is pledged to the countless millions whom we have taken under our paternal rule in that unhappy empire. For every official deed of theirs; for every act of cruelty, injustice, or rapine; for every anna of the wretched ryot's substance wrongfully extracted; for every torture or indignity inflicted upon his most miserable carcase, the Honourable East India Company is responsible.

And now let us see how the case stands. Messrs. Elliot, Stokes and Norton have collected information from all parts of the Madras Presidency, and have heard evidence from every class, directly or indirectly concerned; from the rent-collectors and the rent-payers, and from every section of both. These gentlemen unhesitatingly report, as the result of their inquiries, that "personal violence on the part of the native revenue and police officials prevails throughout the presidency;" personal violence of such a character that, "in five recorded instances, death has followed upon its infliction." They declare this to be "the only conclusion that any impartial mind could arrive at. The use of wooden pincers (the kittie); trussing a man; bending him double (anandal); squeezing the crossed fingers with the hands; punches on the thighs; slaps; blows with the fist or a whip; twisting the ears; making a man sit on the soles of his feet with brickbats behind his knees; putting a low caste man on his back; striking two defaulters' heads against each other, or tying them together by the hair; placing in the stocks; tying the hair of the head to a donkey's or a buffalo's tail; placing a necklace of bones, or other disgusting or degrading materials round the neck;"—are some of the usual ways of expediting the receipt of money. The police officials often however resort to more severe procedures; as, for instance, "twisting a rope tightly round the arm or leg so as to impede circulation; lifting up by the moustache; suspended by the arms while tied behind the back; searing with hot-irons; placing scratching insects, such as the carpenter beetle, on the most sensitive parts of the body; dipping in wells and rivers till the victim is half suffocated; beating with sticks; nipping the flesh with pincers; putting pepper or red chillies in the eyes, &c.; these cruelties being occasionally persevered in till death, sooner or later, ensues."

We must constrain ourselves to tell one or two of the cases which came under the Commissioners' notice. A ryot named Sooboraya Pillay, who cultivates land to the yearly value of two hundred and forty rupees (or twenty-four pounds), was a defaulter on rent-day, in December, eighteen hundred and fifty-four, to the amount of fifteen rupees, or one pound ten shillings. The poor man

alleged that his crop had been very bad; and (probably imagining that the Honourable Company would hardly miss his fifteen rupees out of its total land-tax of fifteen millions sterling), asked to be let off. But no. "They had me placed in the sun," he told the Commissioners, "my head tied down in a stooping posture; they had me beaten with a whip, and stones put in, and pinched my thighs;"—And this, for a deficit of thirty shillings! The miserable man adds, that he sold the bullocks from his plough to pay the money.

In April of the same year, another ryot, Kistna Pillay, the entire amount of whose little rent was six pagodas (or about fifty shillings) a year, being in arrear to the extent of ten shillings, was given up by the monigar, or village collector, to the police; by them was placed in anandal (that is, trussed down with a weight upon his back); was beaten upon the thighs; and, lastly, had the kittie, or wooden squeezer, applied to his fingers. In the case of another cultivator, named Kistniar, there was a refinement in the use of the kittie. It was applied to both his hands by the peons, under the immediate superintendence of the duffadar; but, lest the ordinary mode of pressing it with the hands should not be sufficient, the wretches stood upon it until the unhappy man fell down from pain. His arrear was two pounds, and he had promised to pay that sum in four days, as soon as he received from Pondicherry the proceeds of the sale of his crop, which had been sent by him to that market. But they would not wait.

Commonly, too, these hapless creatures are made to cooperate in torturing themselves. Fancy a full-grown man submitting quietly to stand for half a day with a huge stone on his back, on his head, or on his shoulders! Imagine another tamely crossing his own fingers and thumb, or interlacing the fingers of the right and left hands, while the peon is adjusting the kittie, or rubbing his hands with sand or dry earth for a comfortable squeeze—squatting upon the ground with his arms and legs interlaced, and holding his ears one by each hand!

The unhappy ryots, it would seem, are but too glad to submit to such degradation, in order to escape worse. It would have been well for Abookkier Saib, for example, to have gotten off so easily. This poor fellow (who, I dare say, would willingly have stood upon one leg for a whole week in preference) was put into anandal, his neck being tied down to his feet by a cord only two cubits in length; his fingers were screwed in the kittie till the bones protruded through the flesh; his thighs were pinched till the skin was actually flayed; and he was finished off with a supplementary boxing, flogging, and kicking for the space of three hours. He owed to the Honourable Company eight shillings!

Occasionally, the poor ryot will try to

propitiate the officers by a bribe. Ramasawmy Pillay having got into a difficulty about a balance of nine shillings (which he protested that he had already paid), was advised by a far-seeing friend to give a sheep to the duffadar. The expedient was successful, so far as the duffadar was concerned; but, unluckily, the tosildar (who was the duffadar's superior, and who had not been propitiated), gave poor Pillay a slap on the face, and ordered the duffadar to get the money from him. The usual process followed.

But what would one have? The acting agent of the governor at Ganjam—a very strong-minded gentleman who is of opinion that the practices which we have been describing hardly come up to what would be called torture—assures the Commissioners in his report, that it seems in many cases to be a point of honour with the ryots to hold back their payments till the pincers are produced, or the man is put with his head down to his knees.

This, of course, is the feeling of a gentleman who understands the state of India. There is a privileged class in this country who, on every discussion on Indian affairs ensconce themselves behind this formulary. I am not hardy enough to think of attempting to attack so old and venerable a fortress, which, for a full half century, has defended everything which to European eyes, may appear an anomaly. But perhaps these depositaries of Indian experience may deign, under the shade of those venerable defences, to take a thought of the suggestions of people who have but ventured to peep through an occasional chink or breach in the wall. It is certain that the Torture Commissioners, good simple men, have reported strongly against these practices, and are earnest in the expression of their hope that we shall soon see an end of them. But we own to a strong belief in the immobility of Indian experience.

This agitation is no new one. It is now nearly half a century since the very same abuses were discussed, and were even made the subject of some stringent regulations by the governor in council. But routine set the governor and council at defiance. It has thriven and flourished in spite of them both; and, if we can trust Indian experience, is to be reckoned among the settled traditional institutions of the country. The experienced officer quoted above, declares that "the use of torture or force (for it seldom amounts to torture) to compel payment from a money-loving Hindoo, was a lesson taught by their Mahomedan masters, and never forgotten; it is now part and parcel of their creed."

To us the most puzzling part of the whole is, that, while this practice is now confessed to have been going on for years, yet the East India Company professes to have known nothing about it till this moment, and

holds up its hands in disclaimer. The Board of Directors has its eyes shut; the chairman of the Board turns the suggestion into ridicule; the Commissioners themselves acquit the entire staff of European officials of complicity in the practice, and even, to a great extent, of any cognisance of its existence. Yet there are many facts, even in the Commissioners' own book, which seem very hard to reconcile with such a theory of perfect innocence. Of course it is bad enough, even at best, that gentlemen paid to superintend the getting of tribute should not know how it is done. But there are difficulties. It is true, that the acting joint-magistrate of Coimbatore declares, in his report to the Commissioners, that the statements regarding torture are a pure fiction, at least as regards his district. But plain people will find it hard to reconcile this and similar statements with the fact that the criminal calendar of the same district, which is published in the Appendix, exhibits a series of cases of such torture as having been tried before this very magistrate, in several of which convictions were obtained. Again, the civil and session judge of Chicacole reports that, during thirty years of official life, no such case has ever come before him; whereas, in a case tried in the very same district before another gentleman, the defence, or rather the plea in mitigation of punishment set up by the accused, was, that torturing was the universal practice of the district.

Still more perplexing to European understandings will it be to find that, whereas the Commissioners report that they have seen nothing to impress them with the belief that the people at large entertain an idea that their maltreatment is countenanced or tolerated by the European officers of government; yet, in a vast number of the cases which they themselves report, the uniform avowal of the aggrieved parties is, that they did not complain to the gentlemen,—because who will hear a poor man? They did not complain, because the puttamonigars may say and do what they please. They did not complain, because the tahsildar is both a magistrate and a revenue officer; and to whom could they complain? For our parts, we confess that, whatever the Commissioners may say, it is hard to give some of the English officers of the Civil Service entire credit for their disclaimer of all countenance of the cruel practices which prevail in the revenue and police department. Our eyes are too open to the fact, not only that little zeal or activity has been displayed by them in discovering or bringing to punishment an offence which now proves to have been universal; but that, even when it has been brought formally under European notice (in some instances even in the shape of cruelties so aggravated as to have caused the death of the victim), no inquiry has been instituted, no redress has been awarded. We see that an English col-

lector would dare tell a complainant that if he had paid his land-tax he would have escaped the infliction of which he complained. We see it broadly stated before the Commissioners, as the habitual feeling of the native population, that, when the aggrieved lay their grievances before the Commissioner, or the collector, they (the collectors) refer them back again to the tahsildar, who tells them to go and lodge their complaint wherever they please, and continues his cruel treatment with increased rigour.

SAINT PATRICK.

SAINT PATRICK'S Day in the Morning, in our village, is ushered in by our amateur band, who played the tune so called through the streets for several hours after midnight, scaring the slumbers of the more orderly portion of the community, and accompanied by a mob of the less orderly. Whoever has lived near the practising-room of an amateur band knows that he might as well have a menagerie for neighbour; and now, when they burst out publicly, each making his brazen utmost of noise, the effect is tremendous. The clamour preserves some faint appearance of unanimity only through the exertions of two or three old militia bandsmen—the civilised allies, as it were, of this regiment of musical Bashi-Bazouks. Several times the din approaches; now up the street; now down; blares under the window, and withdraws—the drum's everlasting cadences vanishing last and returning first upon the auricular horizon. In startling proximity or tantalising remoteness, the band proves equally fatal to sleep, and we gladly hear them begin God save the Queen at a magistrate's house close by; although these final throes are the most excruciating of all. The trombone has hitherto grunted his two possible notes with perseverance worthy of a better cause; but, confounded by the slowness of the National Anthem, he loses hold of that primary musical element—Time; notwithstanding, he bates no jot of bass, but blows the harder. The big drum is even more vehement than the trombone, and more undecided; he seems actuated by various theories of accompaniment in rapid succession. The clarionets are wheezy, the fife rambles, the corneopane is in a wrong key, and is playing alternately like a tornado and a penny-trumpet.

I can perceive by the moonlight that our big drummer has already been doing honour to the day. Overcome with libations, he has now laid his huge instrument horizontally on the ground, and himself in the same position beside it; and, in that difficult attitude plays out his part. The loyal tune comes to a close at last, in a climax of discords; and as the procumbent drummer declines to leave off, his drumsticks are forcibly removed, he is hoisted on a comrade's back, his drum on another's; and, after a feeble cheer or two,

they all go straggling off—band and spectators—some to sleep, some perhaps to get drunk or more drunk. The last lingerer is boy Cheevo, a son of the gutter, beggar, idler, probationary thief, who can sleep, if he tries, on a doorstep or under a kennel-arch; he lingers, looking after the departing crowd with something of the air of a host who has dismissed his guests. What is he thinking of, I wonder? Where will he go to? There is no one in the whole world to seek him, receive him, blame him for being out late. Some dull hopes are his, connected with his victualling department, from the dawning festival of Saint Patrick.

Now it is the day itself. Men and boys of the Roman Catholic faith wear bits of shamrock in their hats, and the little girls have each a cross on the shoulder; that is, a round of white paper three or four inches broad, with bits of ribbon of various colours stretched across it like the spokes of a wheel. The chapels are crowded at morning mass; and, at the mid-day ceremonial, the chapel-yards are filled with the overflow of worshippers, who catch a faint murmur through window or door, and stand or kneel outside with due regularity. A little later, the streets have frequent groups of country folk in their best attire—the girls with sleek hair, bright ribbons, and gay shawls, the matrons with snowy-bordered caps and cloaks of blue cloth, and every man and boy of the rougher sex garnished with his sprig of shamrock. The townspeople stand at their doors; acquaintances greet each other loudly; and many are the invitations to come to take a naggin, or a Johnny, or, supposing you are one of the few that still have the medal, as conferred by Father Matthew, you will hardly refuse to quaff a measure of temperance cordial—a liquor, by the way, on which it is not impossible to get drunk.

Every public-house counter is thronged with noisy customers, so is the dark little back-room, so is the room up-stairs—which probably has an old chimney-mirror adorned with two peacock's feathers, two nondescript delft dogs on the mantelboard, and a jug of primroses gathered by the children last Sunday; on the walls a large rough woodcut of Death and the Lady with verses below, a portrait of Daniel O'Connell, and a row of coloured pictures of saints, three inches by one and a-half, glazed and framed in morsels of sheet brass, and a bed with blue check curtains in a corner. In this apartment the élite take their refreshments—which consist of raw whiskey, whiskey toddy, temperance cordial, a little porter and ale of bad quality, and tobacco smoke. How this and the other pretty girl, who are being treated by a friend or lover, can sit with complacency in so stifling a climate, or bear to swallow even a glassful of such flaming usquebaugh, is difficult to understand. Down-stairs, the calamity-water (an expressive name for it)

is usually tossed off neat, and abominable stuff most of it is—the worst new grain whiskey, with its fieriness heightened by poisonous chemicals. I have heard say that the sale of large quantities of corrosive sublimate to the retail whiskey-dealers of Ireland can be proved from direct evidence. The introduction of some milder beverage that might, at least in many instances, supplant this liquid fire which the Irishman constantly uses to drown care, clench a bargain, cement friendship, treat his sweetheart with, and, in fact, applies indiscriminately on all occasions of refreshment, hospitality, or merry-making, would be a very great boon. The Englishman of the same rank sometimes drinks gin, but usually beer, which is a hundred times better than ardent spirits, and the Frenchman's wine is a thousand times better. People in Ireland learn to drink whiskey continually, and teach others to do so, partly because there is nothing else to be got.

The song tells us it was St. Patrick himself who

Taught our Irish lads

The joys of drinking whiskey;

but nothing can be more calumnious. The saint was a man of the most abstemious habits, and his teaching of a very different kind from that just mentioned. The genuine life of St. Patrick, as far as we can make it clear to us at a distance of fourteen centuries, is remarkably interesting; and though many points remain doubtful or in dispute, the main facts seem to be well established. We need not pause to weigh the claims of Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Cornwall, and Brittany to the honour of giving him birth—the evidence appears to favour Scotland—and among half-a-dozen dates we may be content to accept Anno Domini three hundred and eighty-seven as the year in which he came into the world, and four hundred and sixty-five as that of his death, at the age of seventy-eight, and on the day answering to our seventeenth of March. In the language of martyrologists, the day of a saint's nativity is that of his quitting earth and entering into the higher life. His father was Calphurnius, a deacon, who was the son of Potius, a priest. It is asserted by those who maintain the necessity of clerical celibacy, that they took orders after their children were born. The future saint was baptised with the British name, Succoth, signifying (as some say) Valiant in War. He was educated with care and tenderness, and his sweet and gentle character made him a general favourite. At the age of sixteen, having accompanied his parents, brother, and five sisters, to Armoric Gaul—since called Lower Brittany—to visit the relatives of his mother, Conchessa, he was in that country made prisoner by a piratical expedition commanded by the banished sons of a British prince, and, with many fellow prisoners, carried to the north of Ireland,

and there sold into slavery. According to other accounts, he was snatched direct from his home, on a raid of the troublesome Irish (then called Scots) into Britain, at that time left undefended by the departure of the Romans. Thus the youth became slave to Milcho, the petty prince of a district now included in the county Antrim, and his three brothers—receiving the name of Ceathertigh, because he served four masters; but Milcho, noting his diligence and probity, bought the others' shares and made him wholly his own, sending him to tend cattle on the mountain of Slieve-Mis. In the *Confessio Sancti Patricii*, a short piece purporting to be written by himself shortly before his death, and believed to be genuine, many most interesting passages occur, and amongst them the following account of this period of his life, which, with the subsequent extracts, we have translated from the first printed edition of the writings of St. Patrick, published in sixteen hundred and fifty-six, from several ancient manuscripts, by the excellent historian Sir James Ware.

After I had come to Ireland, I tended cattle continually, and prayed many times in the day, and more and more increased within me the love of God and the fear of him, and my faith waxed strong, and my spirit waxed strong; so that, in one day, I would offer up a hundred prayers, and so also in the night time. And I would even remain in the woods and on the mountain, and before the light rouse myself to prayer,—in snow, in frost, in rain, and I took no hurt, nor had I any slothfulness, because (as I now see) the Spirit was then fervent within me.

In the seventh year of his slavery, he heard one night, in a dream, a voice telling him that he was soon to be restored to his native country; and, again, that a ship was prepared for him. "Whereafter," says he, "I turned me to flight, and left the man with whom I had lived for six years, and in the strength of God, who would guide my steps aright, went, fearing nothing, until I had found that ship." He reached a haven, and found there a ship, unmoored and just ready to sail, but the master refused to take him on board, because he had no money. So the young man departed and sought for a cottage wherein he might obtain rest and food. As he went he began to pray, and before his prayer was done, he heard one of the sailors calling after him, "Come back quickly!" and, when he returned, they said to him, "We will receive thee out of good faith; make friendship with us." There is nothing more perceptible in history than the innate power of great men to affect and control those whom they meet.

After many adventures he reached his home in Britain, and embraced his parents; who entreated him, after the tribulations he had endured, never to leave them. But, after some time had passed, he saw one night, in a vision, a man—as if coming from Ireland—

whose name was Victoricius, who carried a great number of letters, and gave him one, in the beginning whereof he read—The Voice of the Irish People. “And whilst I was reading the letter,” says the saint, “methought I heard the voice of those who dwelt beside the forest of Eoclute, which is nigh the western sea, and they exclaimed, ‘We beseech thee, holy youth, to come and walk amongst us!’ And I was greatly touched in heart and could read no further, and so I awoke, and thanked God that after so long a time he had approached them according to their cry.” “And another night (whether within me or beside me, I know not, God knoweth), I heard most learned words, which I could not understand, only this, at the end: ‘He that gave his life for thee;’ and then I awoke, rejoicing.”

After these visions, though dissuaded by parents and friends, he gave himself up to the Church, and to study; beginning under his mother's uncle—St. Martin—Bishop of Tours. On being priested he received the new name of Magonius, and studied in various places on the continent. From Italy he is said to have visited the islands of the Tyr-rhenian sea, and to have received from the hermit Justus, who dwelt in one of them, the famous staff of Jesus.

In the year four hundred and thirty-one, Pope Celestine sent Bishop Palladius on a mission to preach to the Irish, amongst whom Christianity had already taken some hold, but Heathenism was still so dominant that Palladius, after less than a year's sojourn, found himself forced to fly to North Britain, where he died soon after. Then Pope Celestine, considering the eminent piety, learning, and other gifts of Magonius, resolved to send him upon the Irish mission, and therefore consecrated him bishop; at the same time re-baptising him with the honourable name of Patricius, which carried its dignity from the ancient times of Rome (meaning Pater Civium, Father of the People), and was afterwards given to kings of France. In after days—so much do conditions change—it came to have a most vulgar sound, especially in the diminutives of Pat and Paddy; but may, perhaps, regain its pristine rank, since it is now once more conjoined with the blood royal.

In the year four hundred and thirty-two—Bishop Patricius then forty-five years old—landed on the coast of Wicklow; but, being driven to the ship by the Pagan population, he sailed northward to a bay in what is now called the County of Down. Here the lord of the district hastened to attack the strangers as pirates, but was arrested by the venerable looks of the bishop, listened to his preaching, and was baptised with all his family. There Patricius immediately established his first church, which was called, simply, Sahal Phadrig,—Patrick's Barn—whence the parish of Saul, in Down, derives its name. When he

re-visited the scene of his youthful captivity, a strange event occurred. Two daughters of his old master, after hearing him preach, were baptised and became nuns; whereupon Milcho, strongly attached to the ancient traditions, and perceiving that his former slave was now in authority as their successful antagonist, made a great fire of the house and goods, and consumed himself therein; the news of which, coming to St. Patrick, caused him to stand for three hours silent, and in tears.

Having learned that the time was approaching when King Leoghaire would hold on Tara Hill a great triennial convention of tributary princes, nobles, and Druid priests, St. Patrick resolved to come and preach to them, at all hazards, knowing the importance of influencing the great people of the country; so, on Easter Eve, four hundred and thirty-three, the next day being that appointed for the opening of the convention, he raised his tent on the north bank of the river Boyne, and kindled a fire before it. Now, it was a penal act for any one to light a fire in the province at the time of the convention of Tara, until the king's bonfire had first indicated the opening of the solemnities; and when St. Patrick's fire shone through the vernal night, and was seen after by the court and multitude encamped on Tara Hill, the utmost astonishment prevailed among them, and the Druids told the king that this fire must be speedily extinguished, or else the man who had kindled it, and his successors, should rule Ireland for ever. The king instantly sent messengers to drag the culprit to his presence, but when Patrick appeared within the circle of the court, so noble and venerable was his aspect, that Ere, son of Dego, instantly rose and offered him his seat. St. Patrick was permitted to preach, and Ere and Dubtach, the poet laureate, were his first converts, along with Fiech, a young poet under the instruction of Dubtach, and who is judged to be the author of a certain poem extant in praise of the saint. The queen and others followed their example, and at last the king himself. It is on this occasion that St. Patrick is said to have successfully used the trefoil or shamrock, growing at his feet, as an illustration of the doctrine of the Trinity; whence this herb came to be assigned to the patron saint of Ireland, and raised into a national emblem. Soon after, he preached at the Hill of Usneagh, a famous seat of Druidism.

In his peregrinations, he founded several churches and made many converts; and having been thirteen years in Ireland, he established himself in Armagh (the High Place), and on that hill founded a city and cathedral, with monasteries, schools, and other religious edifices. In that place, chosen fourteen hundred years ago by Saint Patrick, the cathedral, several times re-edificated, stands firm at this day, and his archiepiscopal successor retains the

dignity then established, of Primate, and Metropolitan of All Ireland; while, by a curious etiquette, the Archbishop of Dublin is styled Primate of Ireland, without the All. About two years after the foundation of Armagh, Patricius, by this time probably raised to the rank of archbishop, went over to England for coadjutors, and took the opportunity to preach against the prevailing Pelagian and Arian heresies, reclaiming many. Returning by way of Liverpool, when he approached that maritime village, the people from all sides flocked to meet him, and erected a stone cross in his honour. On his voyage back to Ireland he visited the Isle of Man, where, we are informed he found the people much addicted to magic—an old accusation against them; for they were believed to involve their island at will in supernatural mists, so that no ship could find it. Here he preached with his usual success, and left behind him Germain, one of his disciples, as first bishop of Man. Having returned to Armagh, he held a synod, the eighth canon of which forbids a clerk to enter the lists with a heathen for trial by combat (a mode of decision not known to have existed in England till long after this time, and commonly spoken of as introduced by the Normans), and the fourteenth lays penance on whosoever should seek to divine the future by soothsaying or inspection of the entrails of beasts. After this he went to Bally-ath-clith (afterwards called Dublin, the Black Stream), the people flocking out to him; and baptised the king and many others in a well, therefore called St. Patrick's Well; near to which a church was built, on the site now occupied by St. Patrick's Cathedral. Archbishop Usher says he saw the well, and that in sixteen hundred and thirty-nine it was shut up in a private house.

In a subsequent synod, we learn; that four other ecclesiastical dignitaries were unwilling to submit to the authority of Archbishop Patricius; especially as he was a foreigner; but they at last agreed. He settled the Church of Ireland solidly, and appointed bishops and priests everywhere, well earning his title of Apostle of Ireland. He travelled continually—a winged labourer, as Chrysostom terms St. Paul—until too old; when he spent his last years in retirement and contemplation, though not neglecting to hold synods and councils, and rule the affairs of the church. The latest part of his life was passed alternately in Armagh, and in the Abbey of Sahal; and in the latter place, where he had adventurously founded the first of several hundred churches, he expired, full of good works and honours, on the seventeenth of March, four hundred and sixty-five, aged seventy-eight. This is in accordance with Lanigan's chronology, which contradicts Usher, Ware, and others, who place the event in four hundred and ninety-three, in the one-hundred-and-twentieth year of his

age. His obsequies lasted through twelve successive days and nights—made bright as day with torches and tapers—and were attended by multitudes of the clergy from all parts of Ireland. He was buried at Down, thence called Down-Patrick, and the old rhyme says,—

In Down three saints one grave do fill;
Patrick, Bridget, Columbkille.

In eleven hundred and eighty-six, seventeen years after the English invasion, the remains of these three were solemnly translated into the cathedral of Downpatrick, a cardinal legate being specially sent by Pope Urban III. to attend the ceremony; but the rolling centuries changed men's minds, and in the reign of Henry the Eighth, Anno Domini, fifteen hundred and thirty-eight, Lord Deputy Leonard De Grey, invading Ulster, desecrated the cathedral, and defaced the statues of the three saints; and in the same year the famous staff or crozier, so long an object of veneration, was publicly burned along with many other relics, in High Street, Dublin, by order of Archbishop Browne. With this implement is said to have been accomplished the saint's traditionary feat of banishing noxious animals from the Emerald Isle,—when, according to the song,

He bothered all the vermin,

and forced the snakes into the rash act of committing suicide,

To save themselves from slaughter.

But a more credible, and truly beautiful story, is connected with the same staff, namely, that when St. Patrick was baptising Aongus, King of Munster, at Cashel, he accidentally rested the spike of his iron-shod crozier upon the king's foot, and, leaning forward, pressed it deeply in, inflicting a most painful wound. But Aongus, believing this to be part of the ceremony, made no sign of suffering, and with calm and reverential demeanour, allowed the unconscious prelate to proceed with a baptism which was at the same time a petty martyrdom.

St. Patrick is said to have been a man of small stature, but of great energy and activity of mind and body, and we have some proofs that his very aspect must have inspired regard and submission. He was truly humble, wore coarse garments, and worked cheerfully and stoutly with his own hands. He was "Most sweet and affable in conversation, by which he accommodated himself to all sorts and conditions of people, and did so gain their affections, that if it could be done, they would have plucked out their eyes and given them to him." Countless gifts were pressed upon him, which he always refused, except it were to relieve the poor, or build religious houses. He slept on the bare ground, a stone his pillow, till fifty-five years old.

The beginning of his Confessio (to which perhaps, the English word Profession comes nearest in sense) is curious: "Ego Patricius, peccator, rusticissimus et minimus omnium fidelium, et contemptibilissimus apud plurimos, patrem habui Calpornium diaconem," &c. It ends thus: "Hæc est Confessio mea, antequam moriar."

The self-contempt of this exordium was a matter of form; but elsewhere he says, no doubt with full sincerity, "I lived in death and faithlessness, until I was much chastised, and in truth I was humbled by hunger and nakedness. But it was well for me, for in this God wrought my amendment, and shaped me to be at this day what was once far enough from me—that I should care or strive for the good of others, who then regarded not even my own good."

These are simple and pious words of the good bishop, and we may well believe him not unworthy of his place in the calendar of saintly men. Self-denying, humble, fearless, diligent, religious, in a wide and difficult field of action; his life was noble, and his memory is worthy of reverence. Yet certain of the rites with which his day is kept and honoured in Ireland have little reverence in them. St. Patrick's Chapel of Ease, by excise consecration, so crowded to-day, is a small, dingy, strong-smelling place, where, before the wooden altar, over-huddled with foul glasses and battered pewters, in a splash of whiskey, the devotees hiccup and yell the venerable name of their country's apostle as an incentive to debauchery and madness.

The tradesman or artisan who six months ago registered a vow against drinking, formally excepted the season of the Saint, and, after an interval of hopeful quiet, his family are now again to endure the horrors and miseries inevitably brought on by a drunken father, or son, or husband, who, for his part, shall waken to find the path of reformation vanished from under his foot, and harder to regain than ever. The youth, the tender girl, are half-persuaded, half-forced into their first visit to a tavern, in honour of the day. The experienced toper deliberately, and freed from the last lingering touch of shame (sure it's Patrick's Day), wallows into the deepest mire of helpless sottishness. Quarrels rise; oaths and foul words, fists and cudgels, in motion; shrieking wives, weeping sisters and daughters vainly interfering. Then come the efficient green-coated men, truncheons in hand, who, bursting into the thickest of the row, haul off sundry torn, bloody, and foaming creatures, scarcely recognisable as human, to the lock-up. Little boys, some of them not half-a-dozen years old, are made drunk to-day, on account of Saint Patrick. See, for example, this wretched Cheevo, to whom some one has administered a dose that leaves him collapsed, pallid, and idiotic against a wall. Cheevo has not been very

long a street-boy, and perhaps now is his initiation into the joys of drinking whiskey; if so, he had to-day no desire or relish for the draught that scorched his young lips and throat; but, before long, he also will anxiously crave the burning liquor, and beg or steal the means of getting it, and under its influence, perhaps, progress to acts that shall make him worth Society's attention at last; and, while at large, he will certainly not fail to keep St. Patrick's Day with the most unscrupulous exactness.

Alas! the good Patricius! practically invoked as Saint of Sots, Patron of Publicans, Defender of National Drunkenness! What can we say, but that people often use their saints (alive or dead) unreasonably enough—and their sinners too?

WIGHTMOUTH.

WHEREVER is peace, there is no peace at Wightmouth, by land or sea. Each time we visit her, the old place seems to have got another wrinkle—a fresh lot of military lines; she has taken to a new set of tremendous teeth; she is stouter than she was by several well-defined acres. The Shopkeeping nation protects her counter down at Wightmouth with other than yard-wands. If the three-decker vaticinated by the Laureate should come round under the hill, it would find a good many playfellows of its own size opposite Wightmouth. There are half-a-dozen such in sight, as I write, and as many more lying up the harbour; which, in that case, would have a target provided for them free of expense. At present they are compelled to set up white marks and little flags, and blaze away at them in a toxophilistish and harmless manner. Let us take boat and see the practice.

Up Wightmouth harbour is a short voyage, but full of singular contrasts. Here lies a graceful yacht at anchor, with delicate raking masts. The painters are at work upon her without, and the carvers and gilders within. And here rises an ugly hull, with three great pollarded clothes-props, whence flutter no flag in the sun. The heavy boats come and go about her guarded side in silence, with their dismal freights of humanity; and, save for the tread of her sentries, there is little sound from the convict hulk. By the dock-yard are moored two vessels not twenty yards apart, both first-class steam-ships; one homeward, and one outward bound. They, who limp wearily to shore or are carried upon litters on men's shoulders, are wounded from the wars; they, who are embarking so cheerily to the sound of the fife and drum are going to fill their places in the East. Here—beside its little friend, the steam-tug—comes an emigrant vessel, that was forced to put into Wightmouth for repairs. She goes to the antipodes; four hundred souls are on board of her, most of whom will never

see their native land again ; but hark how they cheer the soldiers as they drop down past the transports and set their little band a-playing God save the Queen ! Now we can see the low squab gunboat that was hidden behind her—unsymmetrical, heavy-metalled craft, as little like her graceful neighbours as humble-bee to dragon-flies ; but what a sting she has ! How different, again, is this huge leviathan first-rate, signalling (as she is for ever doing) to her gigantic sisters, with her endless wardrobe of pocket-handkerchiefs ; within her, in a place—as appears to us landsmen—only fit to put coals into, died England's greatest admiral ; an admiral's pennant streams from her even now ; for she is the Wightmouth flag-ship. "There are distinguished foreigners arriving," say the pocket-handkerchiefs ; and, at that shrill whistle, see how the crew swarm up the rigging at full speed. At once every stick of timber has its long line of men, and their hurrahs come down to us from the height like a light rain of music.

This clean white hulk is for a floating hospital ; and these two Stygian black ones—once first-rates of the Line—are coal depôts ; they have suffered as many changes as Dibdin's high-mettled racer, and have reached their final degradation.

Here are, at last, the sides of the great gunnery ship ; and we ascend the accommodation-ladder, and enter through that hole in its stomach which is the gateway of all such mighty craft. We are only just in time. The thirty-two-pounders on either side this deck (that are now made fast for sea, with endless coils of rope, apparently inextricable), shall each be let loose, and shall be run out in some four minutes, when the drum shall beat to quarters. Hark ! how the men come rushing down the ladders and fly to their several posts, each at his allotted work, where all seems rank confusion : the gun-lieutenants watching them to mark which shall be foremost ; and there is emulation enough amongst themselves besides. The gordian knots of rope are all untied more quickly than Alexander's sword could have cut through them ; and the great muzzles of the guns peer forth on either side. The ports were down before, and all was dusk, and what we saw, a mass of struggling forms around a monster. There are the gunners, standing each a statue in his fixed place. The captains and second captains of these guns are lieutenants and mates practising their drill. Some half-a-hundred of them are on board this ship, at school, in hopes to get command of a gun-boat,—one of those many elegant colliers, yonder, with a thousand-pounder, or a thing that looks like it, reposing in the centre of their decks. Nine-tenths of the new faces seen at Wightmouth now, are supposed to be on the look-out for gun-boats.

This beating to quarters, and getting

things ready for action, even to the stowing away of the hammocks, is reckoned, in a well-disciplined ship, to take but ten minutes in all—ten minutes from the first beat of the drum to the first roar of the cannon. In one ship—whither the admiral came at dead of night, and with his own private drummer—this thing was done, they say, in eight minutes. Now they are going to fire ; and, if we don't want to be stifled, we had better get on deck at once, where we shall be only stunned.

Observe the big round hole in the target at longest range, and even the small flag slightly riddled : this at one thousand yards, and this one at twelve hundred, are their marks to-day ; and the men will shoot for prizes. How the ship trembles as she gives her fire, and how we jump ! Very near the flag ! Mark the tremendous leaps that the huge balls taking over the level sea : now it appears but a huge bullet, and now, in the far distance, a small oyster-shell, at dick, duck, drake. Another and another, till we cannot see for the dense smoke, and only, when it clears, the water-founts thrown up along the line of fire. Excellent practice ! The huge balls bury themselves around the targets, and are resuscitated at low-water by the mud-larkers, to make our British thunderbolts again and again ; for we are an economical nation—if it were not for our governments—and make everything go as far as it will. The distance guns can carry, Cousin Jonathan, is from one mile to three ; but most sea-ports can be, of course, approached more nearly. What a strange hurtling sound the shell makes, so different from the sharp thud of the cannon-ball, and how the terrible iron seems to rejoice on its way, over its message of death ! Yet Pax vobiscum ! is their motto, too, I think.

Everybody in Wightmouth is naval, unless he be military : a civilian is, amongst us, literally a black swan. The Alphas and Omegas of both services are here congregated ; the veteran envying the youth, and the youth the veteran. Admirals—full, vice, and rear, and of all the colours in the rainbow—are as plentiful as beads in a purse. There go three of them, cocked-hatted, down the High Street, abreast, whom the innumerable mid-dies evade and dodge away from in all directions, like minnows from sticklebacked perch. A lieutenant-colonel is hardly worth mentioning at Wightmouth, and commanders are drugs. No, my fascinating friend of the Mull Fencibles, it is not in this town that that uniform of yours—although I grant it to be exceedingly wonderful—will make the faintest impression. Remove that delicate down from your upper lip with a paper-knife, and exchange, if you would conquer, that gory weapon for an umbrella. The drums and fifes play here too often to excite even our urchin world. The boy scarce,

looks up from his top on the pavement, or the girl from her doll at the window, while the stately ranks sweep by, through the gateway and over the drawbridge and on to the plain by the sea. That solemn musical tramp, the feet all marching like one, seems here never to cease. Artillery, regulars, militia, and these sad-clothed, ill-looking fellows with the scowl and the metal ring; they whom the phrenologist and physiologist give over unto Satan, and the philanthropist himself despairs of. Some dwell on board the hulks in harbour; but a thousand are lodged on land here in a prison of iron, light and strong; a self-supporting colony, with tinkers, tailors, blacksmiths, shoemakers, bakers, bookbinders—all convicts, indeed, save the chaplain and the doctor; albeit even those professions, also, are far from being unrepresented amongst them. The newest improvements; the secrets which science charms from the latest moon, are put in operation to warm, to lodge, to clean, and to clothe these. Alas! it is not till they have sinned against her, that our country is thus parental to her children.

The principal streets of Wightmouth are made up of jewellers' shops, billiard-rooms, and army and navy tailors; the streets by the water-side of public-houses and old curiosity shops. When his ship is moored in harbour at last, Jack Robinson is accustomed to dispose of the spoils of his voyage—pagods and dried scalps, Russian relics or Carib nose-rings—to the first bidder, and then to make himself the merriest of the crew next door. The slender-waisted, long-haired male population of this vicinity are accustomed to the use of ear-rings, and their round hats—like those of modern ladies—are attached to the extreme back of their heads by attraction only. Rag-shops and flag-shops abound everywhere.

Wightmouth, to judge from the conversation of its inhabitants, is the great repository of the choicest secrets of the government. The question of peace or war has, amongst us here, been long put past a doubt. "We shall have war, sir, mark my words; the war must go on, sir; we shall have war with France, for the French are jealous of us; we shall have war with America—and a very good thing too—or my name's not Crasher." Slasher is of the same opinion. Crasher and Slasher are both anecdotal, narrators of story. "When we were in the Tarantala off Timbuctoo," or, "In that affair with Sandilli in the Paranimpasse Valley," as the case may be. Crasher (junior) is for the most part excitable, illimitably jovial, and comports himself as under press of canvas. Slasher (junior), on the contrary, is of a sublime serene appearance, dressed to oppression, and awful to the stranger as to the foe. But they are both fine open-hearted fellows. There is a third order of man amongst us, and a very good one—the Slasher-Crasher, or marine; and besides

these three great classes, with their myrmidons and ministers of different degrees, there is none in Wightmouth.

A GOLDEN ASS.

It must have been a very dreary old world, before there were any story-tellers, or stories, indeed, to be told. How the same old world could have got on without them I am sure I am at a loss to find out. When creation was not old enough for anybody to have a grandfather, who could tell a delightful fireside legend of the ghost that appeared to his great-grandmother? Events there were to be sure to be discussed; murders; marriages, and migrations; but of the genuine story, the fiction grafted upon fact (with occasionally the fact left out altogether) there must have been a distressing dearth. Everything was too true in those early days—too recent—too freshly implanted in men's memories for the misty, vague, "once upon a time" narrative to exist. But, as the world grew older, there was soon good store of stories and story-tellers. It was soon discovered that the mixture of a lie doth ever add pleasure—not indeed the lie that sinketh in—but that harmless fiction that amuses, and often softens and humanises. No doubt many wondrous legends were recounted after the deluge about some marvellous Ichthyosaurus, or eccentric Iguanodon, equalling in wonder the recent American stories of the Big Bear of Arkansas and the Great Coon of Michigan.

We have been telling stories ever since. We have had the *Gesta Romanorum*, the *Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles*, the *Hundred Merry Tales*, miscalled Shakespeare's, the *Contes de la Reine de Navarre*. Later, the *Decameron* of Boccaccio, interminable romances of *Mademoiselle de Scuderi* and *Mrs. Behn*, leading by degrees into the half dull, half improper novels of the beginning of the last century. But I have nothing to do with these. I merely want to cull a story from a very old story-teller, as old a one, perhaps, as we possess any authentic record of, who flourished in the fourth century of the Christian era, and whose name was *Apuleius*. He is extant still in the Latin of the decline and fall; and "tall" copies of his *magnum opus*, the *Golden Ass* are yet cherished by old bibliopoles. There is an English translation of him by Sir George Head; but it is neither in Latin, nor in English that I became acquainted with him. It was at the book-stall on the platform of the Havre and Dieppe Railway, that I purchased at Paris, the other day for the moderate sum of one franc, a little yellow-covered book, which I found to be a French version of the *Contes d'Apulée*, rather a queer guise and place in which to find my old story-teller of Anno Domini three hundred and odd.

The *Metamorphoses* of *Apuleius* are scarcely suitable to the more refined taste of modern

times, though they still from their curiosity and local colouring command and deserve notice. Miguel de Cervantes probably drew from them a hint, at least, for the famous adventure of the Knight of La Mancha with the wine-skins; there can be no doubt that Boccaccio had read them; and the charming legend of Cupid and Psyche furnished forth subjects for the frescoes with which Raphael adorned the walls and ceilings of the Farnesina villa at Rome. The structure of the novel somewhat resembles that of Gil Blas. In both, the adventures of the hero form the groundwork of the story, but in both, also, more than half the book consists of incidents taken from their own lives, told by different personages. This resemblance is probably due to the fact that Apuleius, like Le Sage, worked up into his romance materials provided by preceding novelists.

There existed at that time a class of literary compositions called the Milesian Tales, the character of which we are easily enabled to determine, though no specimens of them are now extant. Aristides of Miletus first composed them; and they derive their appellation from him. This Aristides was followed by other writers; whose names those curious in such matters may find preserved in the *Bibliotheca Scriptorum Græcorum*. This species of literature sprang up at the point of meeting between the Grecian and Eastern worlds. Aspasia was a native of Miletus, and not only was her house the resort of the philosophers of the day; but, according to Plato, she even gave lessons in rhetoric to Pericles and Socrates. It is pleasant to think of her relating the Milesian tales to these mighty sages. They were familiar trifling compositions, containing relations of the laughable incidents of life, and adventures of love and intrigue, mixed up with great licentiousness. The Romans first became acquainted with them during their campaigns in Lesser Asia. Plutarch tells us that the officers of Crassus's army carried the novels of Aristides in their knapsacks. Their popularity induced Sisenna, the historian of the expedition, to translate them into Latin; but though Ovid mentions the fact of their publication, we hear no more of them during the golden period of Roman literature. In the next century, however, they again came into vogue, and must have been well known to the readers of Apuleius; for, in his preface, he promises to string his stories together in the Milesian strain, and charm their ears with a merry whispering.

Apuleius had enjoyed extensive opportunities for observation, for he spent his early years in Africa, studied at Athens, and for some years practised at the bar at Rome; and, as the result, he exhibits to us a collection of portraits taken from different classes of society, sufficiently resembling the sketches made by the satirists of the pre-

ceding century to convince us of their truth, but less harshly drawn. There is the usurious money-lender; the enchantress taking vengeance on her lover; the harsh step-mother; the hectoring soldier; the oppressed peasant; the Christian woman; the interior of a factory; and the juggling priests of the Syrian Goddess. Every picture tells its own date; the gallery was made under the Empire.

Lucius, the hero of the novel, is introduced to us mounted on a milk-white steed, journeying from Corinth to Thessaly. In the way, he overtakes a classical bagman, or commercial traveller of the Cæsarean era, who is engaged in earnest confabulation with a friend. They are discussing the pretensions of magic; and the borders of Thessaly form a spot well suited to the ventilation of such a subject; for Thessaly has been the chosen home of magical arts, even from the days of Medea. Lucius hears the loud laugh with which some grim tale of glamour told by the merchant is scouted; and, thirsting himself for the marvellous, introduces himself to them as a man eager for information. He reproves the sceptical listener in words, which although calculated to convey to us the real scepticism of the novelist, flatters the speaker into a continuance of his tale. It relates to the untimely death of an acquaintance, brought about by the incantations of a hag—a fact of which the merchant has been himself a witness, in the course of some former Thessalian expedition to procure the butter and cheese for which the district is famous. The story is good enough to beguile the remainder of a toilsome journey; but it is not worth our repeating. It is enough to say, that though supported by the devout belief of the narrator, and the common talk of all the people of Thessaly, it fails to convince the sceptical companion; while the cautious Lucius, when appealed to, gives his verdict that nothing is impossible; but that all things proceed according to the decrees of fate.

The marvellous tale completed, Lucius parts company at the entrance of the city of Hypata, and applies to be conducted to the house of Milo, to whom he has a letter of introduction. Milo is one of a numerous and powerful class that owes its origin to the imperfect state of commercial credit, and the difficulty of finding secure and ready investment for capital under the Roman Empire. He is a miser and a money-lender. Milo is by no means a popular man in Hypata; the influence and extortions of his order have exposed it and him to general hatred; and the old inn-keeper who puts Lucius on his way, does not miss the opportunity of speaking an ill word of her wealthy neighbour, who keeps but one maid for himself and his wife, and dresses like a beggar.

When Lucius arrives at the house of Milo, he finds the door bolted fast; but, after a parley with the maid, who mistakes him for a customer come to borrow money, she admits

him to see her miserly master. He finds the money-lender reclining on a scanty couch, as short as Codrus's bed. He is on the point of beginning his evening meal. His wife is sitting at his feet; and, before them, is a bare table, to which he points, saying hospitably, "You see all we have to offer!" Then, bidding his wife rise, and dragging his unwilling guest into her place, he apologises for the want of furniture, on the ground of his dread of robbers; and, after a compliment on the handsome figure of Lucius, invites him to occupy a nook in his cottage. Our hero accepts the invitation: but, observing Milo's parsimonious style of living, he determines to forage for himself on his way to his evening bath. Accordingly he goes to the market, and buys a basket of fish. Just then, he is recognised by an old friend, named Pythias, whose dress and retinue show him to be a magistrate. He is now, indeed, one of the *Ædiles*, and an inspector of the fish-market. He catches sight of the basket, and inquires how much has been given for the bargain. The price is exorbitant: and, on hearing it, Pythias grasps Lucius by the hand; and, leading him back to the stall, in the harshest tone which the majesty of the *Ædile* could assume, threatens to show the fishmonger how rogues should be treated. Then, emptying the basket in the middle of the road, he orders one of the attendants to trample on the fishes. Satisfied with his own sternness, he advises his friend to come away, adding, "The disgrace is punishment enough for the old fellow." Lucius stands aghast at this rigorous system of administration; but there is no help for it; so, deprived at once of his money and his fish, and wearied with his long journey, and an evening without any supper except Milo's conversation, he betakes himself to bed.

Now the female portion of the money-lender's household consists of two ladies, Pamphile and Fotis. The popular belief of Hypata represents the former as a notorious witch; the mistress of every-sepulchral incantation. By the slightest puff of her breath upon a branch, or a stone or any other inanimate object, she can extinguish the light of the heavenly bodies, and plunge the world into the darkness of chaos. She becomes enamoured of every handsome youth she meets; and, if he refuses to favour her passion, she changes him into some brutish form. Fotis is her mistress's confidante; but her knowledge is not accompanied by the impatience and dark temper which characterises Pamphile. On the contrary, she is pert and coquettish, and readily responds to, if she does not anticipate, the advances of Lucius. His fancy is taken by her elegant figure, and he determines to follow up an intimacy which may guide him to the occult knowledge he is in search of. At length the opportunity for which he has been waiting, arrives. He is admitted by Fotis to see Pamphile transform

herself into an owl, and fly to her lover. The sight excites his desire to follow. At length, Fotis, yielding to his entreaties, produces a box of ointment from her mistress's cabinet. Elated at the sight of the precious treasure, he kisses the box several times; and, uttering repeated aspirations for a prosperous flight, strips off his clothes as quickly as possible; dips his fingers greedily into the box; and having thence extracted a good large lump of ointment, rubs it over all his body and limbs. When his limbs are thoroughly anointed, he swings his arms up and down in imitation of a bird's pinions, expecting to wing his way through the air, incontinent; but instead of any feathers making their appearance, his own skin, alas! grew into a hard leathern hide, covered with bristly hair; his fingers and toes disappeared; the palms of his hands and the soles of his feet became firm, solid hoofs; and—horror of horrors!—from the end of his spine a long tail protruded. His face was enormous, his mouth wide, his nostrils gaping, his lips pendulous, and he had a pair of immoderately long, rough, hairy ears. In short, when he came to contemplate his transformation to its full extent, he found that, instead of a bird, he had become changed into an ass.

Fotis, in her eagerness, has mistaken the box; and, though a compound of rose-leaves would reverse the transformation, she has neglected to weave for her lover his evening chaplet, and he must take his place in the stable till they can be gathered at dawn of day. But at midnight Milo's house is sacked by a band of robbers, and long before dawn, Lucius, laden with the spoils of his late host, is far on his road to their cave in the mountains.

The cave is supposed to have suggested the corresponding tale in *Gil Blas*. The presiding genius—its dame Leonarda—is a crone bent double by age, and with the voice of a screech-owl, who attends upon the robbers, and receives in reward a rich return of invective upon her habits and appearance. Soon another inmate arrives, a young lady whom the robbers have captured in one of their raids. They hand her over to the beldame for consolation; but kind words and harsh looks are alike unavailing; so, promising her an old wives' tale, she repeats the legend of Cupid and Psyche. The lady listens, and is soothed; and Lucius, forgetting his transformation, regrets that he has not his pen and tablets that he may note down every word. Relief, however, more substantial, is at hand. The robbers have taken the resolution to slay Lucius, and sew the lady up in his hide, when a young man offers himself as a volunteer to the horde, and they are induced, from his commanding stature, his boasted achievements, and the rich prize he throws into the common stock, to take him at once for their leader. The youth is the young lady's lover, and, by his manoeuvres, soon effects her deliverance. All the inha-

bitants of her native city turn out to welcome her, when she makes her triumphal entry, mounted on the back of Lucius; and he, to mark his sympathy with the general rejoicings, makes the place ring with brayings, according to his own account, as loud as thunder.

Poor Lucius subsequently passes into the service of some mendicant priests. Their faces were painted, and their eyelids darkened, after the manner of Eastern women. They wore white tunics striped with purple, turbans, and yellow sandals. Their hands were bare, and in them they carried large swords or axes. In this guise they danced along in procession with a wild step, to the music of flutes, cymbals, and castanets, till they arrived at the mansion of some rich proprietor who was willing to repay a grand exhibition of their rites. These rites were gloomy and hideous. As the band entered, they made the premises ring with discordant howlings, and ran to and fro with frantic gestures. They whirled their heads till their long hair stood out on end, and tore their flesh with their teeth and knives. Then one of the party taking the lead, and panting for breath, pretended to be the subject of a more complete possession, as though, says Lucius, the presence of the gods make men weak instead of strong. In a loud chaunt he accuses himself of some imaginary violation of their rules, requiring for its expiation punishment from his own hand. Seizing a whip strung with the knuckle-bones of sheep—the peculiar implement of his order—he lashes himself severely, without betraying the least sense of pain. This exhibition continues until the earth is moistened with blood. At its close, the spectators vie with each other in offering them money and presents of every kind; which the flagellants, well provided with wallets for the purpose, greedily scrape together, and pile upon the unhappy Lucius, who discharges the double function of a locomotive granary and a temple. Thus they continue their career; but at length their knavery is detected. Under pretence of celebrating their sacred rites, they repair to the temple of the Mother of the Gods, and steal therefrom one of the sacred goblets. The theft is speedily discovered; the whole band is summarily thrown into prison, and Lucius is put up to auction.

He is purchased by a master-baker, a kind-hearted and highly-respectable man; but the baker has a wife, who takes an extraordinary dislike to Lucius. At daybreak, while in bed, she calls out for the new ass to be harnessed to the wheel; her first act on getting up is to order him to be beaten; and he is the last led back to the manger. His next master is a market-gardener, who drives him every morning to the neighbouring market with a load of fresh vegetables; and, on his

return, shares with him his evening meal of rancid lettuces, as coarse as brooms. While here, he has an opportunity of observing two significant instances of the insecurity of life and property at a distance from the centre of government:—

There is a cottager, whose small farm adjoins the domains of a youthful and rich proprietor, who employs his family influence and his position as head of his party, to lord it over the city. He makes war upon his poor neighbour, kills his sheep, drives away his oxen, and tramples down his growing corn. Not content with robbing him of the fruits of his industry, he becomes eager to eject him from his field, and, upon some pettifogging quibble, lays claim to the whole property. The poor farmer expostulates with him. The tyrant's answer is to bid his shepherds let slip their dogs, and hark them on to the attack. The faster the party flies, the keener the hounds pursue, and the poor cottager is torn in pieces.

One day, as the gardener is riding home on Lucius, musing on the circumstance just related, he is awakened from his reverie, by a gaunt legionary demanding the ass for the use of his commanding officer, and enforcing the demand with a blow. The gardener wipes away the blood which streams from his head, and mildly begs him to spare so sluggish and unsafe an animal. But the soldier is inexorable, and is on the point of ending the controversy by dashing out the brains of the civilian, when the gardener, by a feint, trips him up, and, pommelling him soundly, leaves him for dead. He recovers, however, and his comrades take up his cause, and lay an information against the gardener for refusing to give up a silver dish, which, as they allege, he has found. With their help the magistrates discover his hiding-place, and throw him into prison to answer the charge; and there being now no one to object, the soldier takes possession of Lucius.

He passes into the hands of a rich Corinthian, who, being anxious to signalise his accession to office by an exhibition of more than usual magnificence, the slaves who have charge of Lucius leave him on the sea-shore, close to the Temple of Sois. He prays heartily to the goddess, and one of the priests offers him a garland, which he tastes; the transformation is reversed, and he recovers his former shape.

After this he goes to Rome, and is initiated into the mysteries of Osiris, and, in conclusion, to use his own words, "Thenceforward I fulfilled all my duties as a member of that ancient college; and with a head newly and thoroughly shaved, joyfully exposed my bald pate to the gaze of the multitude, wheresoever I went."

Thus runs the old story of the old storyteller, otherwise known as the Golden Ass of Apuleius.

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A DEFENCE OF OWLS.

THERE is no greater evil in life than that of labouring under a bad reputation. No description of biped—feathered or smooth, naked or hairy—has suffered more in this way than the Owl, and, for the greater part, most unjustly. Common Fame has invariably associated the owl with melancholy and misfortune, in almost all countries except in ancient Greece—where owls were honoured and promoted to a dignified copartnership with the goddess of wisdom. Its very name has become a byword, its appearance a signal for unseemly mirth or for unconcealed aversion; and all this without the slightest reason. In the simple form of appellation alone, nations, calling themselves civilised, have endeavoured to affix words of opprobrium on the Owl. The learned—in whose erudite bosoms dwell no touch of pity—adopted or invented terms, such as *Bubo*, *Strix*, *Scops* (words conveying the idea of something noisy or unpleasant), as if they desired to create a prejudice by the mere mention of the unhappy bird. Nor have the unlearned been much behind them; for the nomenclature of the owl is scarcely less insulting amongst the common people in every part of Europe. Our polite French ally makes up his mouth, and says *Hibou*, with a strong and spiteful accentuation of the last syllable, which is the obnoxious root of the name in nearly all languages; or he speaks through his nose, as none but a Frenchman can speak, and stigmatises the poor thing as a *Chat-Huant*, or hooting-cat, a designation at once illogical and illiberal. The soft-voiced Italian chokes with the malicious epithet *Gufo*; the grave Spaniard, taking the cigarito from his lips, sonorously exclaims *Buho*; the Lower Austrian imitates the Castilian as well as he can, and cries *Buhu*; while the German, with wondering eyes and unmeaning face, delivers himself of *Eule* (which he pronounces very like *Oily*), as if he had hit upon something superlatively characteristic and transcendental. Vulgarity marks the treatment which the Owl experiences in England. Madge-howlet is, perhaps, the least ungentlemanlike of the names we give; but a number of offensive adjectives are freely applied to designate a bird, quite as estimable as many that enjoy a much better character. In the Highlands

of Scotland, the Owl is served out, so to speak, in barbarous Celtic, as a *Corrasgreachag*, or a *Cailleach-oidhche*,—words which I defy the least harmonious bird of night itself to pronounce; and the Welch leave you to choose between *Dylluan Wen* and *Aderyn-y-Corph*, both of which, you may be sure, mean something disagreeable. The Red Indians of North America, who know no better, call their Owl *Cobadecootch*, and *Wapohoo*; and the native Australians, who ought to be the last people to sneer at others, derisively say *Buck-buck* when they speak of the bird of wisdom. The Japanese have a canine notion of our friend—perhaps they believe them to be feathered dogs—and whisper *Howo-waiwo*, when he sails across their path. The Arabs, with their deep guttural voices, say *Khufj*; but what word the Persians use, I decline to mention. This enumeration might be greatly extended. Enough, probably, has been instanced to show that the Owl is not in the slightest degree indebted to mankind for the ordinary politeness that is due to every stranger.

Let me see now what is said respecting his nature and habits. Pliny, who was always ready to fall into any absurdity, is amongst the first who tried to fasten upon him a dismal and lugubrious character. "The scritch-owl," he says (I follow the translation of Philemon Holland), "betokeneth alwais some heavie newes, and is most execrable and accursed and unseemly in the presages of publick affaires. He keepeth ever in deserts" (which is not true), "and loveth not onely such unpeopled places, but also that are horrible and hard of access. In summer he is the verie monster of the night, neither crying nor singing out cleere, but uttering a certain heavie grone of dolefull moaning. And therefore" (most logical Pliny!) "if he be seene to flie either within citties, or otherwise abroad in any place, it is not for good, but prognosticateth some fearfull misfortune. Howbeit, I myself know that he hath sitten upon many houses of privat men, and yet no deadly accident followed thereupon." Obligated, then, to give him a better character than he intended, Pliny adds, with a sneer: "He never flieth directly at ease, as he would himselfe" (how does he know that?), "but evermore sidelong

and byas, as if he were carried away with the wind or somewhat else."

In Bartholomeus's *De Proprietatibus Rerum*, by Berthelet, is the following: "Of the Owle, Divynours telle that they betoken evyll; for if the owle be seen in a citie, it signifyeth distruction and waste, as Isidore sayth. The cryinge of the owle by nyght tokeneth deathe, as divynours conjecte and deme." Again: "Alexander Ross informs us, in his Appendix to the *Arcana Microcosmi*, that Lampridius and Marcellinus, among other prodigies which presaged the death of Valentinian the emperor, mention an owle which sate upon the top of the house when he used to bathe, and could not thence be driven away with stones. Julius Obsequens (in his Book of Prodigies) shoves that a little before the death of Commodus Antoninus the emperor, an owle was observed to sit upon the top of his chamber, both at Rome and at Lanuvium. Xiphilinus, speaking of the prodigies that went before the death of Augustus, says, the owl sung upon the top of the Curia" (I should say, lamented). "He declares that the action was presignified by the flying of owles in the Temple of Concord. In the year fifteen hundred and forty-two" (a long stride from the time of Augustus), "at Herbiopolis, or Wirtzburg, in Franconia, this unlucky bird by his screeching songs, affrighted the citizens very much indeed, and there immediately followed a great plague, war, and other calamities. About twenty years ago, I did observe" (this is Alexander Ross who is now speaking) "that in the house where I lodged, an owle, groaning in the window, presaged the death of two eminent persons, who died there shortly after."

Calumniators having once been found, it was easy enough for others to follow in the wake of calumny; and writers went on accusing the owl of conduct which had its origin only in their own perverted notions. Even Shakespeare, a constant reader of Philemon Holland's Pliny, is not exempt from this fault; although he atones for it in a place, to which I shall presently refer. When Lady Macbeth is expecting tidings of the death of Duncan, she exclaims:

It was the owl that shriek'd—the fatal bellman
That gives the stern'st good-night.

By calling the owl "a fatal bellman," this unscrupulous lady meant to imply that his voice was the voice of fate, and that her husband must, of necessity now, commit the murder. But if kings are to have their throats cut by their hosts in dreary old castles in Scotland, it is quite time, I think, for owls to be relieved of the accusation of being instruments of such deeds. The shriek was not the prophetic precursor of the deed, but the natural proclamation of horror which all right-minded owls would feel at its accomplishment. One might multiply instances a thousand-fold of the lavish abuse bestowed

upon the owl by poets, dramatists, and even by historians; all tending to illustrate the truth, that if you give an owl an ill name you sign his death-warrant. But it is pleasanter to turn to the bright side of the picture. Indeed, it was chiefly to represent the owl in a cheerful and agreeable light that I undertook this disputation.

Buffon, with his many excellent qualifications, is not quite so much the friend of the owl as, in strict justice, he ought to be; but the discerning reader will know how to separate the wheat from the chaff in which he deals so largely. Speaking of the *Bubo Maximus*—called by the French the Grand Duke—he says: "The poets have dedicated the eagle to Jupiter and the duke to Juno. He is, in fact, the eagle of the night, and the king of that tribe of birds who fear" (let us say, avoid) "the light of day, and only fly when it is gone." Then comes some fault-finding. Compelled to recognise the majesty of the Grand Duke's deportment, he objects to his voice: "His cry is fearful," he ill-naturedly observes, "huihou, houhou, bouhou, upohou," expressions which, in my opinion, are innocent enough in themselves and depend for their effect entirely on the way in which they are uttered. That these tones cannot all of them be unmusical, may be inferred from the remark of Nigidius, an old writer on the habits of nocturnal birds, who tells us that, "Howlets for sixty daies in winter keepe close and remaine in covert, and then change their voice into nine tunes!" Before he dismisses the Grand Duke, Buffon must needs have a fling at his looks: "These birds," he says, "are kept in menageries on account of their singular appearance," a remark which applies with as much truth to at least half the birds in every ornithological collection. But Buffon's spite in this matter is manifest, and it shows itself also in the evident glee with which he describes, after Peter Belon, the infamous use to which the Grand Duke is occasionally turned: "He is employed in falconry to entrap the kite. In order to render his figure still more extraordinary a fox's tail is fastened to him; this appendage attracts the kite from a distance, and he flies towards the duke, not to attack, but to admire him" (Belon is obliged to concede this) "and he hovers near him so long that the sportsman has plenty of time to kill the wondering bird of prey." The Grand Duke has, however, nobler employments, for the aforesaid Peter Belon, who flourished (with a large folio in his hand) in the middle of the sixteenth century, says, in his *Natural History of Birds*: "He is called Duke in French, very possibly, as being the conductor or leader of other birds when they depart for foreign countries." In this sense we may look upon him as a kind of Godfrey de Bouillon, or as a type of Peter the Hermit.

Having nothing more to say against the

Grand Duke, Buffon now turns to the Moyen Duc, or Otus, from the Greek *Ous*, Ear, in Latin, auritus. By the way in which he begins one would think that this genus were Jews: "Its cry is clow, cloud!" and that of the Chat-Huant (felis gemendo or "groaning cat," so called, observes Gesner, because the head, both for shape and bigness, is like a cat's) he tells us is "hoho, hoho!" He then goes on to say: "Both these owls occupy themselves during the day in making ridiculous buffoon-like gestures in the presence of men and other birds. Aristotle attributes this kind of talent only to the Otus, while Pliny ascribes it to the Scops, as if it were a different species, calling his movements whimsical, motus satyricus." The name which Aristotle gives the Otus is that of mountebank, dancer, or buffoon, one who counterfeits what he sees. Buffon adds, as if he had settled the particular question by a general accusation, "I shall merely observe that all these absurd or satirical gestures attributed to the owl by the ancients are common to almost all kinds of nocturnal birds, and reduce themselves, in fact, to an astonished countenance, to frequent turnings of the neck, to motions of the head up and down and on all sides, to chattering with the beak, to trepidations in the legs, and to movements of the feet—one claw of which is sometimes thrust backwards and then again brought forward." While on the same subject Buffon notices an attempted identification of the Otus with the Demoiselle or Numidian Crane (*Anthropoides Virgo*), observing with truth, "The one is as like the other as a heavy turkey resembles an agile sparrowhawk." He then proceeds: "It is to Messieurs the anatomists of the Academy of Sciences, that we are indebted for this idea in the description which they have given us of the Numidian Crane, where they seek to establish the resemblance, and express themselves in these terms, 'This bird has been called the Demoiselle of Numidia, because it comes from that province in Africa, and has certain ways which imitate the gestures of a young woman who affects a graceful carriage and manner of walking, almost approaching a dance.'" This description may be true enough, but it has nothing in common with what I may term the comic attitudes of the Small Duke, and I look upon the allusion as only a covert mode of attacking that hilarious fowl.

For the proof that he is a regular bon-vivant, merry-maker, roisterer—what, in short, we call a good fellow—and not a mope or make-bate, let us hear what Audubon, the distinguished modern ornithologist, says about him. He is describing the barred-owl (*Strix nebulosa*), the chouette of Canada:—"This owl was a most abundant visitor to my solitary encampment, often a most amusing one; and, by less accustomed travellers, might easily have been converted into an inhabitant of another world." Robin Goodfellow, in fact, without

his malice. "How often, when snugly settled under the boughs of my temporary encampment, and preparing to roast a venison-steak or the body of a squirrel, on a wooden spit, have I been saluted with the exulting bursts of this nightly disturber of the peace. . . . How often have I seen this nocturnal marauder" (jocosely said, of course, just as one calls one's best friend an old rascal) "alight within a few yards of me, exposing his whole body to the glare of the fire, and eye me in such a curious manner, that, had it been reasonable to do so, I would gladly have invited him in to join me in my repast, that I might have enjoyed the pleasure of forming a better acquaintance with him. The liveliness of his motions, joined to their oddness, have made me think that his society would be often at least as agreeable as that of many of the buffoons we meet with in the world." It is this individual whom the observant naturalist calls the Sancho Panza of the woods, and under that name we all know how much shrewdness and humour lie hidden. That owls have far more intellect than goes to the making of many a professed diner-out, Audubon abundantly shows. "Such persons as conclude, when looking upon owls, in the glare of day, that they are, as they then appear, extremely dull, are greatly mistaken." He then, in the fulness of his experience, continues:—"The barred owl is more abundant in Louisiana than in any other state. It is almost impossible to travel eight or ten miles in any of the retired woods there without seeing several of them, even in broad day; and at the approach of rain, their cries are so multiplied during the day" (excellent barometers, you observe), "and especially in the evening, and they respond to each other in tones so strange, that one might imagine some extraordinary fête about to take place among them. On approaching one of them, its gesticulations seem to be of a very extraordinary nature. The position of the bird which is generally erect, is immediately changed. It lowers its head and inclines its body to watch the motions of the person beneath; throws forward the lateral feathers of its head, which thus has the appearance of being surrounded by a broad ruff; looks towards him as if half-blind, and moves to and fro in so strange a manner, as almost to induce a person to fancy that part dislocated from the body. It follows all the motions of the intruder with its eyes; and should it suspect any treacherous intentions, flies off to a short distance, alighting with its back to the person, and immediately turning about with a single jump to recommence its scrutiny. In this manner the barred owl may be followed a considerable distance, if not shot at—for to halloo after it does not seem to frighten it much. But if shot at and missed, it removes to a good distance, after which, its whah-whah-whah! is uttered with considerable pomposity." Pomposity

is not the right word here—Audubon should have said “lofty exultation.”

Uniform quickness of vision, does not perhaps characterise all the tribe, for the ornithologist remarks: “Their power of sight during the day seems to be of an equivocal character, as I once saw one alight on the back of a cow, which it left so suddenly after, when the cow moved, as to prove to me that the owl had mistaken the object on which it perched for something else.” With all submission to Mr. Audubon, his assertion can only prove—if prove it does—that that particular owl was short-sighted. I myself once said “Pretty Poll” to a pair of green slippers at an open window on the opposite side of the street; taking them for a parrot, but this was only evidence of a casual mistake. Besides, how does he know that this owl, belonging to a race remarkable for oddity, did not meditate some famous practical joke when the cow suddenly discovered who was on her back?

It is a singular fact, and shows what effect popular prejudice has on the best-regulated minds, that even those who may be looked upon as the Owl’s best friends, cannot write much about him without saying something ill-natured. They resemble the Spartan who voted for the banishment of Aristides because he was tired of hearing him well-spoken of. Yarrell, for instance, falls into the common error from which Audubon could not extricate himself, greatly as the American was indebted to the Owl for entertainment during his nocturnal campings out. “Owls,” Mr. Yarrell remarks, “have but little external beauty of form; the head is large, the expression grotesque, the body bulky in appearance.” These things are not, strictly speaking, beauties; but the possessor of them may have reason to rejoice in mental qualities to which those which are merely personal are as nothing. I know more than one eminent counsel, destined some day, perhaps, to adorn the bench, of whom the same might be quite as truly said. Yarrell adds, however: “Their plumage is soft and downy; their flight is easy and buoyant, but not rapid, and from the soft texture of their feathers, is performed without noise.” If he were describing a presentation at Court he could scarcely pronounce a more finished eulogium: motion without noise. I wish the maid-of-all-work where I lodge would make the Owl her model.

Let us look at the moral qualities of the Owl. Yarrell states that “Owls have been noticed for an extraordinary attachment to their young,” and Dr. Stanley, the late Bishop of Norwich, records a very interesting anecdote of a pair of old birds that carried dead game every night to one of their little ones which had been captured. To act up to the duties of a parent is what many of “us youth” would like our fathers and mothers to do more frequently; we don’t ask them

for dead game, except when we want to give a dinner-party—but only for a handsome cheque now and then, just to keep us—we will say—going. Connubial felicity is another marked feature of the Owl’s domestic life. Observe him as he sits beside his mate, and note her conduct also: is there anything like bickering between them? They nestle as closely to each other as possible, and silently enjoy each other’s society, except at those moments when, the moon shining brightly on the ivied tower, they alternately indulge in song. How provident, also, is the Owl! Aldrovandus says, it purveys well for its young, and so plentifully that, a person being in the neighbourhood of the nest of them, may be supplied therefrom with dainties, such as leverets and rabbits, and yet leave enough to satisfy the young birds. There is no better sign of good housekeeping than that of having a well-stocked larder. Pennant alludes to the same liberal thrift, observing that, when satisfied, the Owl hides (that is to say, carefully puts by), the remainder of its meat like a dog. The fact of the Owl’s utility is of old date. Dale, the historian of Norwich, states that in the year fifteen hundred and eighty, at Hallowtide, an army of mice so overran the marshes near South Minster, that they ate up the grass to the very roots; but at length a great number of Strange Painted Owls came and devoured all the mice. What the appearance of the skies is to the shepherd, the voice of the owl conveys to the thoughtful observer after dark. Willsford, in his *Nature’s Secrets*, says:—“Owls whooping after sunset and in the night fore-shows a fair day to ensue; but if she names herself in French (Huettes) expect then fickle and inconstant weather, but most usually rain.” Of the regularity of the habits of the Owl, take this in proof: “The cry of the Scops-eared owl (*Strix Scops*)” says Yarrell, “is *kew, kew*—whence its Florentine name, *Chih*—perpetual through the night at regular intervals of two seconds, as regular as the ticking of a clock.” Here we have evidence of a number of estimable qualities possessed by the Owl: he is a kind father, an affectionate husband, a generous and yet a frugal steward, an admirable barometer, a watchman fit to be numbered A1 in the metropolitan police; and, to sum up all, a benefactor (in the matter of mice), to the whole agricultural community. There are great ones on this earth who have failed to merit such eulogy. The owl’s disposition, too, is the very reverse of gloomy and morose, as Pliny and his followers would have it. Let us first hear what some of these prejudiced fellows say. The Romans, easily led by the nose, went so far as to make their city undergo a lustration on one occasion because a *Bubo maximus* (the great horned owl), called by Pliny, spitefully, *B. funebris*, and *Noctis monstruosum*, accidentally strayed into the Capitol.

Butler alludes to this accident in Hudibras, where he says :

The Roman senate, when within
The city walls an owl was seen,
Did cause their clergy with lustrations
(Our synod calls humiliations)
The round-fac'd prodigy t' avert
From doing town and country hurt.

This shows a bad feeling in the outset, and the poets—whose true mission is peace and good will, not the excitement of animosity without cause—did their best to increase it. Virgil and Ovid are conspicuous for their ungentlemanlike statements with respect to the Owl. The Negropontine exile in his *Fasti* is particularly abusive, and accuses them of flying about at night and carrying off children from their nurse's arms, and making very charnel houses of the palace courts of the city. It is to this absurd and malicious statement, no doubt, that Pennant alludes when he tells us that "the ancients believed that it (the owl) sucked the blood of young children." To the surprise and regret of every enlightened reader the same naturalist goes on to observe: "a fact not incredible" (he ought to have shown that it was a fact), "for Hasselquist describes a species found in Syria, which frequently in the evening flies in at the windows and destroys the helpless infants."

Neither can I acquit the very first poets of our own country from something very like ill-will towards Owls, in heedlessly adopting the popular prejudice respecting the ill-luck which their appearance is absurdly said to announce. Chaucer, in his "Assembly of Foules," says:

The jelous Swan, ayenst hys deth that singeth,
The Oule eke, that of deth the bode bringeth.

Nor is Spenser a whit more civil—or truthful:

The rueful Stritch still waiting on the beere,
The whistler shrill, that whoso heares doth die.

The author of the *Faëry Queen* has a fling at the bird of night in another place:

The ill-faced owle, death's dreadful messenger.

Why ill-faced? Can anything equal the lustrous splendour of the owl's eyes? What is more neatly arranged than his plumage? Has any bird greater benignity of countenance?

Marston, in *Antonio and Mellida* (sixteen hundred and thirty-three), ominously associates the owl with strange company:

'Tis yet dead night, yet all the earth is clouth
In the dull leaden hand of snoring sleepe:
No breath disturbs the quiet of the aire,
No spirit moves upon the breast of earth,
Save howling dogs, night crows, and screeching owles,
Save meager ghosts, Piero, and blacke thoughts.

And another dramatist, in a play which, I am happy to say, does not keep its ground on the stage, observes:

When screech owls croak upon the chimney tops,
It's certain then you of a corse shall hear.

No doubt of it—when you do hear a screech-owl croak.

The worst of which you can, with any show of reason, accuse the owl—and this by no means applies to the whole family—is a disposition to loneliness; but who can object to that, when, as the Persian poet *Almocadessi* says, "The owl retires from the world knowing the vanity of its enjoyments, and dedicates herself to the contemplation of Divine Wisdom, abandoning all beside"? How many men are there, of our own acquaintance, who habitually seclude themselves, whom we know to be excellent fellows at heart, and the very opposite to surly and disagreeable? But there is an osteological fact, a token from the hand of Nature, which at once sweeps away all the calumnious rubbish about the inherent tendency of the owl to melancholy. Just examine his skeleton, or, if you can be so brutal as to roast him, pick his bones: his merrythought will convince you of his naturally jovial disposition. What is called the screech of the owl is, to any one who has observed the habits of toppers, a proof that he is accustomed to take a good deal of liquor; and his snoring—a thing well attested—is a corroborative sign. On this point, Mr. Mike Goldthred, the dainty mercer of Cumnor, furnishes incontrovertible testimony, and if the song in which he bestows his blessing upon the jolly Owl were not too familiar to every reader, I would give it here at full length. Shakspeare, too, who now makes amends for Lady Macbeth's mistake, and one or two expressions made use of by his heroes, when in dismal circumstances, is loud in praise of the owl's character at the dreariest period of the year. Only read over that poetical dialogue prepared for the edification of the French Court by the renowned Don Adrian de Armado, wherein the personage who represents Hyems sings as follows:

When blood is nipp'd and ways be foul,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
To who?

To whitt! To who!—a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

If you have not here the picture of a cheerful fowl I know not where it is to be found.

AN ORDEAL.

IN SIX CHAPTERS. CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

A FORTNIGHT had gone by. What a new-hued time was this! What a wondrous world revolved within the circle of the old one. New life—new air—new warmth, light and lustre. Although the days were shortening towards the year's end, and sullen clouds hid constantly the vault of heaven, and sunshine came not through, and earth grew cold in the shadow.

Leonard Ross was betrothed to Rosamond Bellew. Her father was surprised, at first:—acute perceptions do not always accompany a shrewd intellect, and the merchant might have gone on not seeing that which was before his eyes, to the end of his days. He was surprised, and at first, scarcely pleased, perhaps. His clerk suddenly transformed into a millionaire was an idea that he could not at once get accustomed to. That the millionaire should become his son-in-law was more easy of acceptance. Still it was all very strange. He was confounded, too, by his daughter's frank, almost proud, avowal of her love for Leonard. Of course, no objections could be urged: he gave his consent. But it was some time before he grew easy under the new state of things. It was curious; puzzling; perplexing, he thought, that Leonard Ross should be a rich man—able to marry his daughter.

To Rosamond and Leonard it never seemed strange or new. They were very happy. That golden fortnight had held for them riches enough to dower many a long life. Existence is more evenly balanced than we think. Perhaps we all drink nectar sometimes; only to some it comes drop by drop, sweetening the daily draught; while others quaff it from the full goblet in one draught and live, thereafter, on the remembered glory.

At the fortnight's end Leonard was to go down to Blishford, the large town near which his property lay, and where his uncle had died, to take possession of the estate, and to arrange various legal matters in connection, not only with it, but with his approaching marriage. Two weddings would take place early in the spring. Agnes was to be claimed by her sailor lover, who would then return from the West Indies, and Rosamond and Leonard were to be married at the same time. The fond dream of many, many years was to be realised; and the birthplace of Leonard was to be the dear home to which he would take his bride. He described it to her, again and again, and sketched faithful vignettes of well-remembered places on stray scraps of paper, all of which she kept and treasured as the costliest works of art. She listened, never tired—asking question upon question with the persistency of an interest that could never be exhausted, for it arose out of a depth of tenderness that could never be fathomed.

But—at the fortnight's end, Leonard was to go. The time came, and he went. Only for a week—a week would suffice for everything, and he was to be back at Christmas-time. It was scarcely like a parting Rosamond said; although her lip quivered like a grieved child's, and her eyes shone through large tears she tried hard to conceal.

Nevertheless, whether at first or at last, separation brings with it the inevitable penalty of suffering, and love will not be

constrained into submission. So Rosamond ran into her little fairy bower and could not be won thence, even by Agnes; who, it had been planned, was to stay with her during Leonard's absence, and who would fain have soothed the passionate grief away.

Meanwhile Leonard pursued his journey; thoughts, memories, and hopes, thronging his brain; new feelings and old, stirring at his heart. Verily there can be few things,

Sweeter than the dream
Dreamed by a happy man.

Great resolves mixed themselves with those happy hopes; ardent yearnings for the future, yearnings in which self was the beginning but not the end of aspiration.

So he went on his way—through the long railway journey, to the great, looming, London-like town near which was his destination. Business, now, grows thick upon him—he may leave him for awhile:

We may leave him sitting in the old oak-panelled parlour, with its quaint furniture, its massive chairs and table, and carved bureau; the room that had been his uncle's study, and where, as the grave housekeeper informs him, her master transacted all his business. Large and various must that business have been. The management of the huge property, which chiefly consisted of houses in Blishford, was only part of it. He still kept up his connection with the merchant's house in Calcutta wherein he had originally made his fortune; he had large speculations afloat, grand schemes, even at the very time of his death—when paralysis cut short in one instant all the old man's hopes and ambitions for ever. Leonard, during the days he passed in that old house, thought often with much marveling as to the manner of man his unknown uncle had been. He asked many questions of the demure housekeeper.

"He was a hard gentleman, sir, though I say it. Many a time, in the bad winters, with fever about, and half Blishford a'most driven to famine, he's been begged of for money to help the poor; and he, out of all his wealth, would never give a fraction. And his poor tenants in some o' them miserable courts and places—where a body hardly likes to go, they're so foul and wretched—if in the worst of times they were backward with their rent, it fared sorely with them."

Leonard heard and mused within himself, gravely and sadly, for a long time as he pursued his task of examining the papers, letters, deeds and memoranda, which had been kept for the heir's arrival, with the lawyer's seal affixed upon the locks of the drawers which held them.

So, in the old oak-panelled parlour, with the bronze lamp shedding a flickering light on the carved bureau, and the thoughtful face bent over it with the firelight glowing in the wide grate, and the polished walls shining

with a dark resplendence,—we leave him until to-morrow.

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

A WINTRY night in the outskirts of London, snow on the ground; deep already, and deepening at every moment. The air is thick with large flakes that fall noiseless on road and pavement, on house-roof and church steeple, on pillared porch and garden wall. It was bitterly cold. The snow that had fallen was not soft, but frozen into a cruel hardness. Footsteps left hardly any imprint in it, and the track of wheels and horses' hoofs that the day's traffic had left had been long since effaced, and no new vehicles came down the quiet district to renew them. Houses, houses, houses on all sides, but jealously closed: only a hall lamp shining at rare intervals through a fanlight. No cheerful glow came through crimson curtains, a generous contingent from some warm cosy nest to the bleak, bare, outside night. All without is silent, blank, chill. What is it *within* one of these "handsome houses, where the wealthy" City men and merchants dwell? For this is a suburb of "first-class villa residences."

Through the blinding snow—through the relentless biting cold, a gentleman who, having newly emerged from a neighbouring omnibus, afforded a black relief to the unmitigated pallor of surrounding things, dashed on, very quickly and determinedly. His colour was fast changing however, first to iron grey, then to pepper and salt, and finally to salt by itself. He reached his destination, rang at the bell, as he entered by a wide gate into what under its white masquerade dress, seemed to be a garden and shrubberies: then sprung up some steps, knocked loudly at a door whose massive oak and awful knobs even the snow had respected, and shook himself free from the cloudy flakes that covered him. One more look out into the forbidding night; one more instinctive shiver and shrinking from the rude gust that came, with snow for its ally, right in his face. Then the door flew open and he stepped in. The massive portal closed behind him. Where was the harsh night gone? What had become of the incarnate dreariness? the black vault above; the lurid desolation of the world below?

Here was a wide hall, well lit by two swinging lamps of painted glass, that looked like ripe summer fruits hanging from a garden wall; pictures rich and warm in colour; and one or two statues. A fair white Welcome stood on one side, holding out her hands and smiling with her lip, her eyes, her brow, with every curve of her gracious face and figure; and a Peace, not needing to smile, her look was so serene, with her arms folded purely over the book she held to her breast, and her olive-wreath changed for one of Christmas holly, red-berried, shining-leaved, that another hand

than the sculptor's had placed there. Evergreens decked the walls, the picture-frames, the lamps;—and the fragrance of bay-leaves scented the warm air. The newly-arrived guest looked round; as if with dazzled eyes, he passed his hand across his brow,—while the servant relieved him of his hat and his cloak. And now, sound begins to add itself to the other accompaniments of the scene: a warm, happy murmur of voices, through which, presently, a light, tremulous, girlish laugh is embroidered like a silver thread on crimson. And then some cunning hand evokes a passionate flood of sound from the pianoforte: it rises, it sinks, and swells, and rises again, and falls in tiny crystal droplets, and then ceases. For the dining-room door has been opened, and our sometime wayfarer in the snow has entered.

A large room, glowing warmly with crimson, and opening into a smaller one, beyond which again the faint light of a pendant lamp reveals a tiny conservatory. They are seated round the blazing fire in the first room, all but the one who stands by the piano—her white fingers yet poised over the ivory keys. A hale, handsome old man, two little girls nestling on the hearth-rug, very fairy princesses, of blue eyes, golden hair, and dainty apparel; an older boy poring over a book, and bright-faced Agnes Ross, her look alert and flashing, her whole countenance radiant and happy, seated on the sofa, the other place on which has been just vacated by Rosamond.

Oh, happiest Rosamond! She looked up and saw the figure standing in the doorway.

"Leonard! Oh, I knew it was you."

They gathered round him: his sister, with a fond embrace; the children, in much demonstrative glee; even slow-moving Mr. Bellow rose from his chair, and met him with outstretched hand.

"The train was late," he observed, as he seated himself. "Delayed one hour by the great snows." Agnes made Leonard take her place. He sat beside Rosamond on the sofa, and then his sister attacked him volubly with inquiries as to how he had travelled? was he tired? had he dined? But the questions answered, he leaned back, glad to be silent, perhaps. The picture was complete. Laughing children, the sweep of soft rich drapery, the pearl-like light of lamps, the cordial sound of the flaming fire, and the sweet luscious odours that stole in from the neighbouring flowers: luxurious allurements and gratifications for the senses, refined and subtle as the tastes they wooed and won—all were here.

Leonard again passed his hand over his brow.

"Dearest, you are tired," whispered Rosamond, bending close to him in sweet, sudden anxiety. Her hand timidly touched his shoulder. He took it in his own, and looked at it; the fair, soft, little hand, the delicate wrist

well guarded by its outer sleeve of purple silk, and within that, drooping frills of finest lace, and a shining bracelet of gold thickly set with emeralds, clasped about it, and ever and anon slipping up the round arm. Fair little hand!

Leonard looked at it; then at her sweet face, where a faint flush was gathering and fading, and then glowing again, like sun-rays upon snow. Then he looked round the room, and finally his gaze rested full on the face of Mr. Bellew, his host, and future father-in-law. No sign of weariness in Leonard now. There was even more than usual energy and vigour in his face; he rose erect in his seat, still holding the little hand in his, still gazing at the old merchant's placid, well-favoured countenance.

"It is a bitter night, outside," Leonard said. "It will be a hard winter."

"Hard winter, truly!" observed Mr. Bellew. "My horses fell three times this morning. At last I had to get out and walk a street's length to the counting-house. Have you had any adventures, Leonard?"

"Not of that kind," replied he, the faintest smile quivering at his mouth.

"No. But we look for something more stirring from you, who have been away ten days; in that romantic manufacturing district, too. How did you leave Blishford?"

"Cleaner than it had ever been in its life, I think, for the snow fell even faster than the dirt."

"All business satisfactorily settled?" Mr. Bellew asked, en passant.

"The business is settled."

"Come, come; you needn't blush, Rosamond!" said Mr. Bellew, who seemed genial even to jocularity on this occasion. "So much of the preliminaries over, then. Well—well—well. Miss Agnes, shall I give you this hand-screen?"

The old gentleman bent forward, always studiously polite to his fair guest. It was curious to watch his grave face relax into a smile of stately, Grandisonian courtesy, while all the time the shrewd eyes shone, the inflexible mouth was firm and hard.

"Papa, papa!" cried one little fairy who tumbled round on the hearth-rug—a tiny bundle of azure silk and lace—with a rosy face beaming up in eager inquiry, "Is it true, papa, is Rosamond to be married soon?"

"And will she go away?" chimed in the other, "and won't she be our very own, any more?"

Rosamond rose. She might be excused for seeking her work from a table in the inner room, pending the answer to these inquiries. But Leonard followed her—Leonard drew her yet further away—into the little conservatory, at one side of which Rosamond was accustomed to sit and read or write or work. Her little desk was there now; her chair stood beside it, and a white vase with a single crimson rose in it.

She took this last in her hand, and examined it with great attention.

"It is for you," she said, softly. "I have watched it budding day after day, and this very morning it opened. It knew you were coming, you see. I had taught it to know."

"Shall we sit here awhile?" said Leonard. "I like this place. It is pleasant to be here."

"And remember," said she, "you have everything to tell me."

He started. She smiled up at him, in the very overflowing of contentment.

"Oh, I have so much to hear!" she went on, gaily, "the history of ten days, the full, true, and particular history. You know it is of no use to attempt to satisfy me with less. So begin, do begin."

She sat down, and he took his place beside her. Such a serene, sweet face was drooped from his gaze, such quivering happiness played about the rosy mouth. There was a brief silence: they could hear the children's voices in the other room, and Agnes' vivacious tones clear above the rest.

"She is telling them a story," said Rosamond, "and I am going to hear my own special story—am I not?"

Leonard's voice, steadfast and sustained, vibrated on the murmur of distant sound with special distinctness.

"Yes, darling, you shall be told."

Something in the tone of his voice, an indefinite, indescribable something, smote Rosamond's quick sense. The shy happiness faded from her face; she looked up with a swift, appealing glance—a sort of helpless deprecation of ill.

"Leonard! What is it?"

"I will tell you all, my Rosamond. My Rosamond," he repeated fondly, with a quiet smile, that insensibly smoothed away, for the moment, the trouble in her face. He held her hand close, and began.

"You are to see me, then, going through that wonderful town, at once so rich and so squalid—so magnificent and so miserable, with its thousands upon thousands of inhabitants mostly poor—many of them destitute—some even despairing. Through the dark, dismal streets, where all the falling snow was polluted by smoke and filth, and even through the frost the air was heavy and impure. Past miserable dwellings—hovels, where people seemed festering, not living; where I saw gaunt figures moving about with wretched faces, ashen-lued—with glaring eyes, and sunken, hollow cheeks. I saw their hungry, fierce looks as they passed me by—these creatures that want, and disease, and ignorance together seemed to have left scarcely human. Rosamond, my heart swelled as I saw them, and knew that the avarice and cold-heartedness of my uncle had helped to make them so. I thought that in the days to come, life should hold better things for them, that I would repair the injuries—right the injustice that he had done."

"Ah—your uncle's property was in those miserably streets?"

"Chiefly.—I planned great benefactions, I imagined gigantic schemes of improvement. In my mind I looked on the same places—and the people in them ten years hence. I thought how we would work together to help them—minds and bodies."

"And we will—we will!" cried Rosamond, with unconscious apprehension giving poignance to her tone.

"Ay, love, if it please God." He stopped a little after those lowly-uttered words. Then he resumed.

"From thoughts, dreams, plans like these, I went back to Woolthorpe, the old house where my uncle lived his latter years, and died. I went back, thinking of these poor souls' misery, which I was to alleviate through my great happiness. That was last night, darling. Last night, at this time, I was thinking to myself of this night's joy of return." He went on more rapidly. "And I set to work, tying up papers, arranging the deeds and parchments with which the old bureau was full, and which the lawyers and I had been busy over for many days. I had just finished; I was closing one of the small inner drawers, which slightly resisted the effort. I pressed it harder, and touched some secret spring, it seems, and a side drawer sprang open."

"How strange!" said Rosamond.

"A paper lay there, carefully folded, not very long since written. I saw my uncle's bold signature at the bottom of the page. I think I knew what it was before I opened it and read." He paused an instant and drew breath. "It was my uncle's will, which they had vainly sought, and could not find."

"Yes—but—I do not understand—" She faltered, for she saw in his face ample interpretation of all the rest.

"It was a will in his own handwriting, dated a very few weeks before his death. A will, by which he leaves all his property in the charge of trustees for the benefit of charities in Blisford, and elsewhere; but especially to found institutions, hospitals, and asylums in that wretched town. You see, Rosamond, my schemes were anticipated. Remorse came to the poor old man, and a yearning to do something by his death that might alleviate the wretchedness he had helped to increase during his life! God knows the secrets of his heart; it was not all hard."

"But, *you*?"

"I and Agnes are mentioned in the will—five hundred pounds is left to each of us. Also, enclosed with it was a letter to his former partner in Calcutta, recommending me to him. It was always his wish that I should go there."

"Leonard! don't speak in that manner! Leonard! Leonard!" She turned upon him her pale, agonised face. She caught his arm

feebly, looking round with an imploring, searching look. "Wait a little, I cannot, cannot understand yet."

"Rosamond!"

"No, no," she cried hastily, "don't try to tell me."

He put his arm round her, but, in the action, his calmness fled from him. He leaned his head down on his hands; he hid his face. One sudden, passionate groan escaped him. Then was silence, through which they could hear Mr. Bellow's voice, grave, deliberate, and decided, and the children's musical treble blending with it. Twice Rosamond tried to speak, but the words died away, unuttered. A strange, almost fierce look, unnatural to see on her girlish face, quivered about every feature. At last she whispered:

"Will this separate us? Do you mean that?"

"Do I mean it?"

"Because," she went on, hurriedly, but still in a whisper, "if it is done, it will be done by you. There is no one else to do it; no one—no one else who could—" She stopped.

Leonard looked up. With her two little hands she clasped his brow so that he could not look at her. And the mutinous, half-frenzied look still grew, and grew.

"It is not right, it cannot be right," she said mechanically. "God could never intend—"

"Hush! Let us look steadily at our fate; let us meet it, since it must be met,—submissively."

"What is our fate to be, then?" she asked, abruptly; "it is for you to decide."

He did not understand her meaning, though he thought he did.

"No, Rosamond, it is for neither you nor me to decide. It is already fixed."

"Does anyone know of—of this will beside you?" she said, quickly.

"No one. The person who must first be informed lives in London. I shall go to him to-morrow."

"No!" she said, imperatively, and paused.

"No," she said again, imploringly, frightened at Leonard's silence.

"Rosamond!"

"We—we could do all he wished," she whispered, while a burning spot rose on each cheek, "even as you planned before, before you found—. It would be no wrong done to any human being. Leonard, Leonard?"

He drew her closely to him, and kissed her forehead with a sad, tender pain expressed in his look.

"Leonard! O, speak to me!"

"Wait. Think a little."

"Think!" She broke from his arms, and looked up in his face in cold reproach. "Can *you* think of what is the issue of all this? Do you love me less entirely than, than I love you? Anything, everything, is to me better, nobler, truer than that we should part. *We!* It is not one little month since we first learned to

say that word. I had known it and uttered it in my heart, long, long before. I knew you must love me by the strength of my own love. I knew we were one. Heaven made us so.—Yet you would part us! You could bear to do it!"

"I could bear to do it," Leonard repeated slowly, looking at her, "*because* we are one."

She stretched out her arms in a sort of helpless, passionate appeal. Her hand touched the crimson rose, smiling in gorgeous fulness and completeness from its crystal vase. She looked at it for a minute, then—her face changed. The dilated eyes softened, the fiery spot faded from her cheek. The frantic passion was dying out. The first instinct of rebellion was yielding to the truer, purer, woman-nature. She bent her head down into her hands.

"We were so happy, so happy. God pity us!" she said; and the tears came plenteously and tenderly. And Leonard, in his soul, cried "God help us, strengthen us!" For he needed both help and strength. In a little while she knelt closely beside him, her head leaning on his breast, weeping out the passion that had burned so fiercely as to convulse the delicate frame wherein it flamed. Presently when Leonard spoke, his low voice seemed gradually to still the sobs. She looked up—with the old sweet look, that for him her face had always worn. It almost struck down his courage to see it. With a flash came the thought of the coming life—life without *her*. What that meant to him, only his own heart could tell. For a brief space he wrestled with that heart. It was mutinous, it resisted the crushing fate that loomed heavy and dark before it. All the strong passion of his man's nature roused itself, and rebelled against the suffering. It fought fiercely, it struggled with desperate strength. It cried out against the weary years; the desolate cruel time that was coming. How often do we recoil thus from *the time that is coming*. Why do we not remember that we live in eternity, and so,—be patient?

Some such thought came to Leonard, and helped to still the tumult. And Rosamond did not guess what had passed during those moments that he remained so still,—shading his face with his hand. She did not know all the meaning of the uplifted look with which he turned to her again. And he only said,

"Rosamond, my Rosamond! We will have courage." Then they heard the children calling them.

"I will not go back, in there," Rosamond said faintly. She laid her hand on the side-door that led into the corridor. But suddenly, she remembered—what it would be when next she saw him, and she shrunk back with a low cry.

He bent over her. He folded her in his arms. As a mother that yearns to her child, with a tenderness as pure, a sorrow as sacred, Leonard held his betrothed closely

strained to his heart. Again he said, and with a kind of stern resolve, as to himself:—

"We will have courage!"

Then he let her go.

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

Two months more, and Leonard Ross was on his way to India. He only waited for his sister's marriage. Then he went. There is little need to relate the history of those two months. For Rosamond they held much strife, struggle, and passionate but impotent resistance. It was Leonard who had to teach her what he, alas! needed all his strength of manhood to recognise with submission; that in patience and power of endurance lay their hope, and not in rebellious strivings against the inevitable. That it was inevitable they both felt, Leonard from the first, and Rosamond later: there was no possibility of tampering with the circumstances before them, unless by a dereliction from that straight path of truth and honour which had ever been the roadway of Leonard's life.

So, they parted. Parted, knowing in how full, and deep, and wide a sense of parting. Agnes, married to her sailor-lover would be wandering about the world for years to come,—that link of possible communication was broken. And Mr. Bellew in the midst of his bland courtesy, contrived to take his measures decisively and surely. Very soon after the disclosure of what he called "the truly extraordinary circumstances of the case," he removed his household to an estate of his in Cornwall. He laid down no stringent rules, he impressed no stern commands; but with the quiet, cruel, cold shrewdness which ever went hand in hand with his indomitable will, he ensured the absolute and entire cessation of all intercourse between his daughter and her lover. Rosamond, high-spirited and resolute as she was, could not combat with the experienced and gentlemanly scheming that her father employed when he chose. Leonard was almost equally at fault; for, though he knew the character he had to cope with, it was only with the theoretical knowledge that the penetration of a good man has into the nature of a worldly and designing one.

Mr. Bellew gained credit for much magnanimity in permitting Leonard to write once, once only, before he left England. The letter was written, but it never reached her. She saw that the ship had sailed in which she knew he was to go. She even heard of his embarkation from poor Agnes, bridal Agnes; torn between conflicting joy and grief, the union with her lover, and the parting with her brother.

After that, a blank. The grave itself, it seemed, could not have divided them more surely.

In the solitude of the wild sea-shore, with her little sisters for her companions, Rosamond learned acquaintance with the face of her sorrow. There the quiet capacity to

endure, grew and waxed strong upon the ashes of the fiery emotions which had at first spent her strength. Leonard had said, in almost the last words his voice had borne to her:

"Have no fear. We can bear it."

Nevertheless, there were seasons of exquisite pain—of ineffable weariness and desolation, when the face of Consolation was hid from her, and the presence of Peace was no longer with her. Seasons of doubt, of self-upbraidings—when she could fain have called herself traitress to the great truth of her life; and, in bitterness and scorn looked on the submission which she had learned so hardly. But one doubt never came to her—the cruellest, the worst pang was spared. Next to her trust in Heaven was her faith in Leonard. After all, she who loves thus, is happy.

Meanwhile, there came many suitors to Miss Bellew, and even when her youthful radiance had faded, as it did fade sooner than it should have done, many came. And her father chafed wrathfully at the whimsical obstinacy of woman-nature, but nodded his head wisely the while, saying, "In time—oh, in time!"

At length, one strange, wonderful day, there came to Rosamond a letter. Leonard wrote, openly and with no attempt at disguise—it was singular that, so sent, the letter ever reached her. But it came—she had it, this absolute, tangible, visible thought from him to her. Only a few words—but there could be no more to Rosamond than they held for her. He said—"Tell Mr. Bellew I have written. I do not seek to deceive him, as you know, my Rosamond. But I must write, I will write. Something must go from me that your eyes will look on, that your heart will receive. Soul to soul we are together, but while we live otherwise than in the soul, we crave for more, and the humanity is strong within me, and cries loudly." Little more than this—but it was enough. It lit her life for many, many months. Moreover, she wrote back openly, as he had done, and never knew that Mr. Bellew, grown more cautious and acute, for his former negligence, did not suffer the letter to go. More than once in the years that followed, letters were intercepted by the watchful, inexorable old man. Rosamond never knew—never suspected.

So the years went on. The two little girls grew up, and one after the other, the elder sister saw them leave her. Her brother was at the head of the great mercantile house of Bellew, and at last the old merchant retired with his eldest daughter to an estate he had lately purchased, and which he had settled on Rosamond. There the old man lingered out his remaining days, and there he died, nine years after Leonard Ross had left England for India.

Then Rosamond was alone. She lived a very quiet, solitary life, only different from what it had been before her father's death,

inasmuch as her close and devoted attention to him being remitted, she had more time to give to the charities and other beautiful and womanly duties with which her life was lustrous. The Lady of the Manor was like a good angel to the poor, the ignorant, and the suffering around her. The appearance of the tall, slender figure, with its gentle, gliding dignity of movement, and the drooped face, so sweet and pale and thoughtful, was a signal of help and consolation to many an aching heart in the village and about the country where she lived.

Thus it was one day early in January, such a day as comes sometimes in mid-winter like a thought of childhood to an old man; telling wondrous tidings of the far-away spring that is—though we see it not,—and that will surely come to us again. It was evening, and the sun was near to his setting: great purple clouds hung about him, and fragments of them, as of a rent robe, were scattered over the clear sky. The wide landscape seemed to tremble in the amber light that was shed across it from the west; the leafless branches of the trees were traced, intensely black against the golden horizon, while groves of dark and heavy-foliaged firs opposed their rounded masses of shadow to the lustrous heaven, and would not draw in any of the radiance with which the world was overflowing.

Nestling among the abrupt hills and wild breaks of moorland, lay the park and manor-house where Rosamond Bellew lived. The greensward sloped to a broad stream that flowed through the domain; beyond it rose woods, purpling in the distance. Crowning the hill, nearer, was a grove of pines, tall, column-like, and with a "whushing" music, as of distant waves, ever murmuring about their crests. Great trees stood grandly about the park—benign oak, and lofty beech, cedars, with a mystery in their low-spreading branches, and their eternal depth of shade. Joyous with aerial beauty the birches looked, grouped on a slope near the grey old mansion, like girls who longed but were ashamed to run. They were divided by an invisible fence from the dainty garden underneath the windows of the lady's special sitting-room. Behind these birches the radiance of the sunset grew and faded every evening now, and Rosamond always stood at her window to watch it.

She stood there now—a tall, grey-clad woman; no longer young, either in face, in figure, or in movement; but fair still, and gracious to behold, with a look which had in it some kinship to the clear, cold, and pure serenity of the winter evening. So she stood, her hands clasped lightly together, shining white upon the dusky, cloud-like folds of her robe, watching the sunset, and thinking—thinking—thinking.

Not fifty miles from that quiet English valley flows the sea, and its waves break

stormily outside the harbour into which the ships come, many in a day, from every part of the world, bringing hundreds home. Who shall say that it is a miserable world, when one day can hold so much of happiness as those simple words express—*coming home*?

There is one ship just coming in, and the passengers crowd on the after-deck; some already straining their eyes to catch the first sight of a beloved familiar face on the shore; some lounging careless, too used to wanderings to feel much of the sacred joy of return; some curiously gazing about them, new to the scene, and their perceptions keenly aroused to everything around. But one or two stand apart, with eyes that look outward but see inwardly, and thoughts that are trembling, deep, deep down underneath the outside unrippled calm of aspect—thoughts that none may guess at, and only One knows are there.

The erect figure of a man stands out a little aloof from the rest. He is watching the sun sink below an English horizon—watching the soft clouds hovering over an English landscape. His dark hair—you may see silver streaks in it, though he is not old—is tossed by the wind about his brow—over his face. He loves to feel it—to recognise the old familiar breath on his cheek, for it is part of the home he had lost so long, but now has found again. Ten years he has been a stranger in a strange land, but now—he is coming home.

You who have never left it never know rapture like the heart-leap to those words. Your eyes do not see the glorified beauty which *his* drink in with every common sight, so long unseen till now. The cries of the sailors among the rigging of the many ships around—the familiar shouts on shore—the clanging of bells, the simplest, most accustomed sounds, come on his ears with a very anguish of remembrance. He had never forgotten them. But between the two verges of remembrance and oblivion dwells the actuality which is beyond and above both, in which there is no degree—it is—complete and full and satisfying.

Our traveller stood so silent that a fellow-passenger addressed him twice before he heard. But then he turned round, neither vexedly nor impatiently.

"Yes; it is a lovely evening for our landing," he said, smiling.

"May I ask," for these two had been companions during the long voyage, and one, at least, was much interested in the other, "do you go direct to your own home to-night?"

"No. I have no abode in England. It is a wide home that I am coming to. But—it is home."

"Let us then stay at the same inn to-night."

"Many thanks; but I am going on farther at once. I start immediately on landing."

He smiled again,—a courteous genial smile

to his companion; a very strange, wistful, half-eager, half-restrained smile to himself. Involuntarily his eyes seemed to seek the sunset again. Glowing, golden, ambient, shone the sky, and the water in which it was reflected. Far away, on shore, he could see woods and fields and rising hills. Perhaps even, dimly, he could catch the cloudy outline of one of those hills behind which Rosamond Bellew was even then watching the last rays fading behind the birch-trees, and thinking—

And perhaps it may be that thought can leap to thought more quickly—more surely, than glance responds to glance, or word to word. Who can tell?

But thus it was that Leonard Ross came home.

A REMEMBRANCE OF AUTUMN.

Nothing stirs the sunny silence—

Save the drowsy humming of the bees,

Round the rich ripe peaches on the wall;

And the south wind sighing in the trees,

And the dead leaves rustling as they fall:

While the swallows, one by one, are gathering,

All impatient to be on the wing,

And to wander from us, seeking

Their beloved Spring!

Cloudless rise the azure heavens!

Only vaporous wreaths of snowy white

Nestle in the grey hill's rugged side;

And the golden woods are bathed in light,

Dying, if they must, with kingly pride:

While the swallows in the blue air wheeling,

Circle now an eager fluttering band,

Ready to depart and leave us

For a brighter land!

But a voice is sounding sadly,

Telling of a glory that has been;

Of a day that faded all too fast—

See afar through the blue air serene

Where the swallows wing their way at last,

And our hearts perchance so sadly wandering,

Vainly seeking for a long-lost day,

While we watch the far-off swallows,

Flee with them away!

A PLAYER'S BENISON.

HARD by the Clink, by the Bankside, near Winchester House, there lived in the first years of the seventeenth century a kind-hearted and prosperous London play-actor, named Edward Alleyn. He inherited a little property, received more with his wife, prospered as to his investments, whether in theatrical property or land, and prospered also in his own profession of an actor, wherein Heywood the poet wrote of him, he

was

The attribute of peerless; being a man

Whom we may rank with (doing no wrong)

Proteus for shapes, and Roscius for a tongue,

So could he speak, so vary.

At Dulwich he is still to be seen in picture,

with his hand on the best part of him, his heart, clothed in a sober fur-trimmed gown, and with a grave good-tempered face, set in a dish of frill;—every one knows how, in the old Shakespearian days, folks carried their own heads about in ample linen dishes.

The days of Edward Alleyn were the days of Shakespeare. Furthermore, we are now speaking of a time when the parish of Edward Alleyn, in which he enjoyed the dignity of the churchwarden's office, was the parish of Mr. Shakespeare, also a prosperous play-actor and playwright. Phillip Henslow, Esquire, Alleyn's father-in-law, Edward Alleyn, Mr. Shakespeare, Mr. Edw. Collins, and John Burnett, were the only persons paying, in that part of London, a rate so high as sixpence a-week towards the relief of the poor. And neighbour Shakespeare was on friendly terms with Alleyn. There is a love-letter from Alleyn's wife, Joan, to her husband in the country. This husband and wife lived thirty years together, and seem to have corresponded in the temper of true lovers to the last. There is a letter from Joane Alleyn, written nine years after marriage, partly crumbled into dust with age, though young and fresh with pleasant words and gentle thoughts, in which Shakespeare is mentioned as a dropper-in upon their household.

There has been a plague in London, and the players are forced to stroll through the provinces. "My entire and well-beloved sweetheart, still it joys me, and long, I pray God, may I joy to hear of your health and welfare, as of ours. Almighty God be thanked, my own self, yourself and my mother, and whole house, are in good health; and about us the sickness doth cease, and likely more and more, by God's help, to cease. . . . For your coming home I am not to advise you; neither will I. Use your own discretion. Yet I long and am very desirous to see you; and my poor and simple opinion is, if it shall please you, you may safely come home. Here is none now sick near us; yet let it not be as I will, but at your own best liking. I am glad to hear you take delight in hawking; and though you have worn your apparel to rags, the best is, you know where to have better; and as welcome to me shall you be with your rags, as if you were in cloth of gold or velvet. Try, and see."

Of the part of the letter in which Shakespeare is mentioned, some parts have been lost through decay; but there is enough left to show the meaning. "About a week ago there came a youth, who said he was Mr. Francis Chaloner [her husband was then staying with a hospitable family of Chaloners] who would have borrowed ten pounds [equal in money of our time to fifty], to have bought things for . . . and said he was known unto you, and Mr. Shakespeare of the Globe, who came . . . said he knew him not, only

he heard of him that he was a rogue . . . so he was glad we did not lend him the money. Richard Jones went to seek and inquire after the fellow, and said he had lent him a horse. I fear me he gulled him, though he gulled not us."

And there were new plays in those days worth going to see: first nights of *Lear*, of *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Othello*; though Alleyn, whose interest was in the *Rose*, on *Bankside*, and the *Fortune*, probably performed only now and then by chance in plays of Shakespeare's writing. He played, perhaps, the *Lear* or *Romeo* of other writers; for, in his theatrical wardrobe, we find that he made provision for such parts. There was "a scarlet cloak, with two broad gold laces, with gold buttons of the same down the sides, for *Lear*." There was also among his cloaks "a purple satin welted with velvet and silver twist; *Romeo's*." There are also upon the list a "*Harry the VIII.* gown, an *Angel's* suit, a blue damask coat for the *Moor in Venice*, a *Black Angel*, and *Priam's* hose in *Dido*." With respect to the black angel we may remark, that after Alleyn had shown himself a pious benefactor to his country, the Puritans, who cannot abide play-acting, said that his great charity of *Dulwich College* was not an actor's deed, but the deed of a man who desired to atone for the crime of having been an actor. One night, they say, and *Aubrey* repeats the story, Alleyn was playing a demon's part upon the stage, when he saw Satan himself upon the scene, and, by terror and remorse so brought about, was led to found the charitable institution, which he called *God's Gift*; but for which, if this account be true, we have only to thank *Beelzebub*. The story is an idle one, that has been told of other men. Another form of it speaks of an actor who played *Death*, and, coming off the stage, was shaken hands with by the king of terrors, who had his own genuine dart in his bony fingers. The story, as regards Alleyn, is said to have begun with the fact that the old theatre, the *Rose*, cracked, and frightened the audience, while a devil was upon the stage in *Marlowe's Faustus*, of which play Alleyn, in his *Faustus jerkin* and cloak, was the hero. Our purpose, in what little we say here of the old actor, is to show out of what spirit *Dulwich College* really was produced, and that, play-actor as he was, the saints in their own conceit would do well if they could compass ever so little of what they would call his state. That he was in a very good state we can honestly assure them.

He was kindly, generous, and just; never ashamed of his vocation, humbly pious—which is a very different thing, indeed, from being vaingloriously pious, and no doubt a worse thing in the eyes of some. He came by his money honestly, was frugal and yet hospitable, careful and yet the reverse of miserly. The poor player in trouble wrote for help to

"sweet Ned Alleyn," and he had it. Take this letter for example. "Mr Allen, I commend my love and humble duty to you, giving you thanks for your great bounty bestowed upon me in my sickness, when I was in great want: God bless you for it. Sir, this it is: I am to go beyond the seas with Mr. Browne and the company; but not by his means, for he is put to half a share and to stay here, for they are all against his going: now, good sir, as you have ever been my worthy friend, so help me now. I have a suit of clothes and a cloak at pawn for three pounds, and if it shall please you to lend me so much to release them, I shall be bound to pray for you as long as I live; for if I go over and have no clothes, I shall not be esteemed of, and by God's help the first money that I get I will send it over unto you; for here I get nothing, so that I leave in great poverty here, and so humbly take my leave, praying to God, I and my wife, for your health and Mistress Allen's, which God continue. Your poor friend to command, RICHARD JONES." Many prayed for Ned's health and Mistress Alleyn's. He was kind to the poor, friendly to those of his own way of life, merciful to his debtor. Of a large debt from a theatre bequeathed to him by his father-in-law he forgave half, and took the rest in a small share of the receipts from gallery admissions. In making another bond with players he gave up a thousand pounds rather than drive a bargain hardly. He gave, and it was given unto him, even in this world. Partly, accidents of inheritance enriched him. He had four fathers to transmit their substance—two of his own, and two of his wife Joan's, for both he and his wife inherited originally from fathers who died early, and received subsequent inheritances from new fathers that their mothers gave them. With his wife's second father Alleyn had a business partnership; and with his wife Joan, his "good sweet heart and loving mouse" the partnership was perfect, while to her sister, Bess, whom he called Dodipoll, he was as good a brother-in-law as wife's sister might wish. Her parents he called father and mother. If it is any proof of goodness to be attached warmly to home, Alleyn was one of the best men in England. While the playhouses are shut in London, because of plague, and he is strolling with his company, he writes many a letter in this strain: "My good sweet mouse, I commend me heartily to you and to my father, mother, and my sister Bess, hoping in God, though the sickness be round about you, yet by His mercy it may escape your house." Then he shows minutely what precautions should be taken, and goes on to say, "I have sent you by this bearer my white waistcoat, because it is a trouble to me to carry it. Receive it with this letter, and lay it up for me till I come." He adds an account of where he is going, and what he is doing, and having subscribed himself her

loving husband, breaks out afresh in a postscript: "Mouse, you send me no news of anything; you should send of your domestical matters, such things as happen at home; as how your distilled water proves, or this or that, or anything what you will. And, Jug, I pray you let my orange tawny stockings of woollen be dyed a very good black against I come home, to wear in the winter. You sent me not word of my garden, but next time you will; but remember this in any case, that all that bed which was parsley in the month of September, you sow it with spinach, for then is the time. I would do it myself, but we shall not come home till Allhallows-tide. And so, sweet mouse, farewell, and brook our long journey with patience." No blusterer is this Tamerlane when he has taken off his buskins; very happy is this Lear in his own home when he has put away his "scarlet cloak with two broad gold laces, and buttons of the same." A patient friend, kind son, fond husband, and a man who, since he had no children of his own, became a father to the fatherless.

For it is because he was childless that he made provisions out of his estate for helpless orphans and the aged poor. In founding Dulwich College he wronged none who were of his own name and blood; indeed, he took the utmost possible care of them by ordering that the chief officers and emoluments at Dulwich College should be bestowed, when possible, on men of his own blood, and if not that, of his own name. Nothing was forgotten in his will that should have been remembered in it. Even the humble relative who made a runaway match with one of his college chaplains (and who, upon receipt by Alleyn of information to that effect, in a most tedious and scholarly thesis or letter from her husband, was no doubt forgiven without loss of time) is lovingly remembered. Alleyn's wife Joan shared in his whole design. She knew well that Ned was not the man to leave her peniless. They were in as sweet accord throughout their whole lives as the strings of Alleyn's lute when he was making his best melody. He had a great delight in music, and could play on lute, cittern, and viol. We give, therefore, to her as to him credit for the good deed that was done. They were humbly thankful for God's gift of riches and comfort to themselves—they had no descendants to transmit them to—and would found with them, therefore, what they piously called God's Gift College for the Poor. The Dulwich estates upon which it was planted Alleyn received from a thriftless nobleman, who sold them, piece by piece, for ready money. Full value was given for them. The spendthrift, of course, complains of the man who takes what he has lost; but he has no solid charge to make, and to his sneer at the college and its founder's motives, the play-actor's answer is, "My heart in that action is best known to God that gave it me. If I

have done it for worldly glory or vain ostentation, God knows, and will reward accordingly."

Before we look into the action itself, let us say that, after thirty years of happy marriage, Joan Alleyn died, and her husband endured but a few months of single life before again seeking the blessings of the married state. He married Constance, daughter of Dr. Donne, by whom he was survived. When he married her, the Dulwich College was already in existence; and at his death he made for her the provision promised in her behalf to her father—a bequest of fifteen hundred pounds, which is equivalent in value to seven or eight thousand in the money of the present day. It has been said, that in Alleyn's last days he gave way to false sentiment by becoming one of the poor brothers on his own foundation, wearing the uniform and eating the allowances provided. That is a mistake. He dined with the poor brothers as a loving friend, on holidays and special days; but he retained until his death, at about the age of sixty, his own natural position in society. As for the poor brother's gown, he was so far from affecting it, that we find among his last recorded personal expenses very handsome clothes—a beaver hat (taffeta lining in the head), a satin embroidered hat-band, orange-tawny silk for a night-cap, and silk stockings of many colours, "which hath been knit for me, rose-coloured, popinjay, ash-coloured, decoy and sea-water green." Could a man be a recluse in popinjay silk stockings?

Alleyn was nothing of the sort; nor was there any monastic meaning in his rule, that all officers and poor brothers and sisters in his college should be single people. The rule did not exist at first, and was not contravened when his most eloquent chaplain married the serving-maid. Afterwards, we may say, if we please, that Alleyn, wishing to comfort those who needed solace, looked upon the single state as the most pitiable, and thought that any one who married ceased to be an object of compassion. But no doubt the truth is, that he connected in his mind marriage and multiplication. Having narrowly adjusted his measure of help to the means of helping, he foresaw confusion and uncertainty that would arise out of the doubling and trebling of mouths by the growth of families within the college precincts, and considered that the stability and even working of his institution would be best secured, if the comfort of it were confined to single people. He feared, and provided formally against, depreciation in the value of the property with which his college was endowed. How much it would increase in value, he did not foresee, nor do we yet know clearly. His direct endowment was an income of eight hundred—or at the present value of the money, four thousand—pounds a-year. The produce has now risen to ten thousand, but it is supposed that the value is

more nearly twenty thousand; careless management of the estates, as happens at the Charterhouse, causing a great depreciation in the income yielded, as compared with that which ought to be obtained.

Ten thousand a-year, however, is a noble revenue. What is being done with it? Let us first state simply what Alleyn intended to have done. He wished, in the first place, to help the poor orphans, and, in the next place, to help the aged poor, of his own parishes; considering as such Saint Botolph's, Bishopsgate (in which he was born), Saint Luke's, Finsbury, and Saint Saviour's, Southwark; in which he followed, during a quarter of a century, his calling as a player, and in which he made his fortune; lastly, Camberwell, in which he died. From these four parishes he wished to have in his college always twelve boys, either orphans or the sons of parents utterly unable to bring them up, as being themselves weekly recipients of parish alms. If such children were not found in the four parishes named, they were to be sought elsewhere. With the same proviso, there were to be chosen from these parishes six honest men and six honest women, who were past the age for work, and remained destitute. These persons were to be lodged and fed within the college walls, the boys taught, the poor brothers and sisters cherished in their last days of infirmity and sickness. The provision made for education of the boys would suffice also, and was ordered to be used for the instruction of seventy-two other children who might repair to the school, paying a small fee towards the cost of rods, paper, and candles. Moreover, there were to be, as part of the plan, almshouses in London for the solace of some thirty poor people, from the number of whom poor brothers and sisters were to be taken as vacancies arose. The college was to be managed by a master, with general oversight; a warden, with care over the accounts; four fellows, namely, two preachers, a schoolmaster, and an usher. These, with the six poor brothers, six poor sisters, and twelve poor scholars, were, by charter and by statute, appointed members of the college.

In his statutes Alleyn added six chaunters, or junior fellows, who should be, two of them music masters, and the other four "men of handicraft trades, viz., tailors, gloves, embroiderers, shoemakers, or such like, and able to sing." These persons were to exercise their trades for the good of the college, and "also every day, in the afternoon, teach and instruct, in their several manufactures, such and so many of the poor scholars as shall be found unfit for the university;" it being Alleyn's order that those of his orphan boys who showed good parts should be maintained at one of the universities, and helped to attain a liberal education and calling; to which end it was provided, that at any rate all vacancies in the more honourable posts

connected with the Dulwich College itself should be filled, whenever possible, with persons who had in such manner risen through the school. The boys who showed no special aptitude for book-learning were to be taught those trades for which they seemed most fit, and put out as apprentices, the college paying the apprentice-fees.

Stringent regulations were made to prevent waste of funds or neglect of duty by non-residence or otherwise, on the part of officials at Dulwich; and a check was put upon them by the nomination of the churchwardens of Alleyn's three parishes in London, as six assistants, who were to be present at the half-yearly audits, take part in elections, and so act as to be generally a hindrance to the growth of any internal abuses. Over the whole machinery the Archbishop of Canterbury was to watch, in the capacity of visitor.

Now, the charity has been so managed as to give the six assistants constant trouble, and to bring frequently the admonitions and instructions of archbishops into play. First, there was an objection to spend any money at all outside the college bounds; there was no getting the alms-houses until the assistants went to law about them. At present they exist only as miserable, damp hovels in Lamb Alley, Sun Street, Bishopsgate. Then the six chaunters to teach music and trades were declared against; and, although Alleyn in his statutes distinctly and formally excludes them from the number of the thirty members of the college, a judicial decision was obtained—as judges now say, a reversible one,—to the effect that they were illegally added to the number of the members authorised by charter, and could not therefore exist. Therefore, they never have existed, and the share of the funds given to them by the founder has not been put into “the common chest” provided for the case of surplus, but annually put into their own pockets by the master, warden and fellows, while a small proportion has gone also to the wasteful increase of the pensions of the twelve poor brothers and sisters. Every year the entire surplus is in this way eaten up. The master has grown out of comfortable rooms and decent means into a handsome house and undue income; the old process has gone on, in fact; the charity has become a warm nest for its managers and very little else. The teachers of trades having been got rid of, the boys have not been taught trades, nor have the teachers given instruction to eighty; they have, while drawing increased income for their services, been abiding in a very slovenly way by the twelve boys of the foundation, who have been very ill-taught, and of which seldom or never one has gone to any university. Leases have been granted foolishly, and careful audits shirked.

When the assistants became firm in insist-

ing on strict audits and exact compliance with the statutes, an attempt was made to throw them after the chaunters, but the law lords not only all decided that the assistants held their powers under the statute legally, but most of them also hinted that Lord King was wrong in having decided the provision as to six chaunters or junior fellows to be void. “As to that distinction between the junior fellows and assistants,” said Lord Campbell, “if it now arose for the first time, I am not prepared to say what my notion of it would be, or whether I should not say they were both in the same category.” And Mr. Justice Patteson said, and went some way to show that, “if this was *res integra*, it would appear to him to be extremely questionable whether the six chaunters, as they are called, do not stand on the same footing and have not the same rights as the six assistants.” We shall say no more of the days of abuse and Chancery litigation upon which Alleyn's College of God's Gift has fallen. The abuse is too well acknowledged to need inquiry; what has now to be urged most emphatically is a proper and sufficient remedy. The charity commissioners have had two schemes in mind, and there is one now before parliament that we think open to grave objection.

For it is proposed almost to set aside the charitable purpose of the institution, and to make Alleyn the founder of an endowed boarding-school for young gentlemen of the upper and middle classes. There is an opinion rather prevalent, that endowments become wealthy like this of Dulwich, which ought to be and when well managed, is expected to be, worth twenty thousand pounds a-year, are too much for the needs of the poor, and had best go as precious gifts in aid of first-class scholarship among the sons of gentlemen. Therefore, at Dulwich, the poor brothers and sisters are to be thrown into the background, the twelve orphans transformed into twenty-four foundation boys, are to be sunk to the basement in a lower school, and taught only a few rudiments, while into the foreground is brought another Charter House School, another Westminster or Winchester. The chiefs of the college are to have great salaries, a thousand and more is to go to one, eight hundred and more to another, five hundred to another; there are to be masters well paid, who have also boarders' fees and other perquisites.

Now, of all this plan we can only say, that inasmuch as it is worse than Alleyn's, we do not see why it should be preferred to an attempt to preserve the spirit, while avoiding bondage to the letter of the founder's wishes. There are a great many absurdly devised charities, of which the funds must be diverted to new uses before they can be made of service to society, but that is not true of the design of Edward Alleyn. Though there are plenty of workhouses in the land, its Christian character will scarcely be the worse for

a few nooks in which there is a chance of absolute solace in his last days, to the worn-out pauper who has starved in honesty through the mature years of life. And though there are—not plenty of—schools in which orphan boys may learn to add two and two, there is a real use in the charity which provides places of education that will discover lurking powers, develop and foster them, giving a strong help up to the lowly orphan who deserves and needs it, and distributing his less able companions in trades by which they can learn to feed themselves. We think the country would be better served by thus giving help to the needy after Alleyn's way, than by giving money to the rich according to a main part of the scheme of the Charity Commissioners. A wise development of the fine-hearted actor's plan according to the resources now at the disposal of his representatives, and the existing wants and feelings of society, would lead to a proposition differing in many respects from that which is now asking for the public approbation. For such a development we look with confidence, and trust that it will not exclude the consideration of a claim to which Alleyn himself never in all his life was deaf; the plea for a little cordial help preferred by members of his own profession. Who else would be so ready as Ned Alleyn to stretch out a hand to brethren in distress? His mind made easy about means of helping by a foresight of the increase of his funds, what could he have liked better than to feel that when his profession became large, and the profits of many an able, noble member of it sometimes most precarious, he should become the helper of his brother's child in generation after generation, and a friend to those of his own calling not in life only, but down to the remotest day?

POST TO AUSTRALIA.

THE firm that I am connected with does not believe in letters: their faith is in personal interviews. They do not write about business: they transact it. The consequence is, that I am always at sea: I am always going between Austinfriars and Australia. Not being brought up to the sea, it cannot be expected that I should like this.

I am not a scientific man. I have never even been to the Polytechnic Institution. But, not having anything particular to do at sea besides to be sick, I indulge in attempts to invent methods of facilitating the delivery of persons and letters between St. Martin's-le-Grand, London, and Broad Street, Melbourne, in spite of the chaplain of the clipper *Presto*, in which I have just arrived; who considers that it is an impiety to be interfering with Nature's geography. He says that the world was made round, and that we ought to go round it in the regular manner, when we want to go from

one place to another. But I take the commercial ground; and,—observing that a general re-arrangement of the world seems going on: that the Nicaraguan Canal is being made a short cut across America, and the Suez Canal is to give the go-by to the Cape of Good Hope—I don't see why I should not have my scheme for getting to Australia.

It may startle at first—I admit that it is bold—but the late Mr. George Stephenson remarked before a parliamentary committee, that the making a railway to the moon was merely a question of expense; and Australia is not the moon. On the contrary, Australia is the antipodes. That very phrase suggests my scheme. Instead of going round to Australia, why not go down to Australia? An Artesian well is merely a matter of cost. If it costs so much to make an Artesian well two miles deep, of course it can only cost so much more to go on making it right through the earth. I don't mean to say that if you bored straight down, you would come out precisely at Melbourne; but you could tunnel in that direction. You could worm your way down. It would take time and money; but I suppose the Appian Way took time and money, and M. de Montalembert suggests that we are very like the Romans. We should more than justify the comparison, if we could drop our letters and newspapers down a tube to Australia. To me, personally, it would be a great convenience to be let down in that way; for our firm, in establishing branches at Sydney and Melbourne, *will* have personal interviews; and I am the only man, they tell me, that they can trust.

Something must be done. The more the colonies develop themselves, the harder it is to get at them. Our firm says, that it is all the fault of the Lords of the Treasury. My Lords cannot, naturally, be expected to take much interest in commercial questions. But, if the principle, suggested by the chaplain of the *Presto*, that you should be made to go round the earth, be a Conservative principle, it is a Liberal principle, I should think, that you may go across the earth, and that is what the present Lords of the Treasury in a Liberal government strictly forbid. They will make you take the longest way, and resort to the slowest means of taking the longest way. Consequently, our firm is not very successful with the branches at Sydney and Melbourne. Our firm—and the fact is true also of the whole trade of England—exports more goods to Australia than to any other part of the globe, the United States excepted. Australia is deemed the best market we now have in the world. Our firm—and that is also true of the Bank of England—has been saved from a commercial crisis this past year's winter by the gold I and others have brought home from the Diggings. Our firm has lost, in the interest on money floated round the world, in compliance with the views of my Lords, a sum which would enable the

senior partner to retire, comfortably. The total sum lost in interest by the entire commercial community would make my tube. I have calculated it carefully at per vertical mile. Well, then, I say something ought to be done.

When I first began to go to Australia, in eighteen hundred and fifty-two, it was not so bad. You could go by screw-ships, via the Cape. To be sure, they all broke down, or went ashore, or never got to Melbourne; and our firm told the authorities that they would break down, or go ashore, and never get there. But it was an experiment and it showed attention on the part of the Lords of the Treasury. You could also go—and that was the way our firm sent me—by the Peninsular and Oriental Company's route. It was zig-zag, which is nearly as bad as all round about; but it was fast. You rushed to Marseilles, and caught a boat there. You rushed across the Isthmus of Suez, and caught a boat there. You got to Point de Galle, and caught a boat there; and, if you were lucky in hitting the boats, you got to Melbourne in about seven weeks after leaving London. The boats between Point de Galle and Melbourne were nothing to speak of. They were little, and overcrowded, and dirty, and slow; but, then, it was only a colony that you were going to, and the Peninsular and Oriental Company, having taken the contract at a low rate in order to keep rivals out of their waters, were not likely to ruin their shareholders. But what happened? When the war broke out, our firm said to me, "We must make new arrangements with our branch at Sydney; you must be off there to-night."

I went to the Peninsular and Oriental Company, and asked about the berths from Point de Galle. "Dropped that service," said the clerk. No boat from Point de Galle! The fact is, the Peninsular and Oriental had given up several of their boats to the Government for the conveyance of troops to the Crimea; and they had convinced the Lords of the Treasury that the Point de Galle screws must stop running. Just then, our firm was doing a tremendous business with Australia; yet my Lords managed to keep up steam postal service to India, Brazil, Spain, West Indies; places that did not take one-sixth part of the value of the goods that were pouring into Australia: but they left Australia nearly destitute. Our firm and several other firms remonstrated, but my Lords had made up their minds; and, during the seventeen months that have elapsed since the Peninsular and Oriental got off their Point de Galle contract, I and others have had to go round the world, and to go in sailing ships. Capital clippers, the Liverpool clippers, but they take eighty to one hundred days in going, and not very much less in coming. Now, why, as a colony increases, should you diminish the facilities of getting to it, the war notwithstanding? I

would be much obliged if my Lords would answer that.

But my Lords are going to do something, now that there is Peace. They have issued a minute, in which they are good enough to tell us commercial men, that there are three ways of getting to Australia; via the Cape; via Suez; and via Panama; and—with great modesty, declining to pronounce any opinion of their own, as to which is best—they ask the six Australian colonies to consider and agree which route shall be adopted. They invite steam-ship companies to tender for all the routes. This is no doubt believed to be very energetic; but, all the while that the six colonies are wrangling—as they are sure to do—I shall still have to go by the clippers; for it will be at least a year before anything can be settled. Our firm says, "Put on the Point de Galle boats again." But the Lords of the Treasury are not going to prejudge the question in that way. Other firms say, that if the Official Hydrographer (a person who would rather puzzle you in an argument, I should think) be set to calculate, he would very soon find out which is the shortest route—commercial men generally regarding the shortest route as the best route. They say, that if you draw a line from London to Melbourne it will go by Dover, Paris, Marseilles, Suez, the Chagos Islands, across the Indian Ocean, right into Broad Street, Melbourne; that there are railways, steamers, and caravans into Suez; and that all that has to be done is to put ten-knot steamers on between Suez and Melbourne. This would land letters between London and Melbourne in forty-four days. But my Lords say, that although this is very true, the form must be gone through of waiting a year or so until the colonies have fought out the battle of routes.

I say—Make the tube; or, if you will not go to that expense, cut as straight across the globe as you can; and, for mercy's sake, get the circumnavigating discussion out of the Circumlocution Office as fast as possible.

FURTHER TRAVELS IN SEARCH OF BEEF.

I HAD been recounting my want of success in pursuit of beef in Paris, and my deplorable break-down at His Lordship's Larder there,* to my friend Lobb; (informing him, also, in justice to the original establishment in Cheapside, London, that it is now revived, and in full cut of some three thousand dinners per week); and he, a renowned beefeater, as well as an able financier, appeared considerably interested in my narrative. Lobb is a man of few words, and not emotional; yet he was good enough to say, on this occasion, that he sympathised with me, and would put me in the way of procuring good beef shortly. We were conversing soon after—

* See page 49 of the present volume.

wards on the interesting subject of the variation of the exchanges of Europe ; and Lobb was endeavouring to explain to me by what fortuitous inspiration of rascality the Neapolitan cambrieri—those greatest thieves of the world—were now charging a discount of nineteen per cent upon English money, and of no less than thirty-five per cent upon their dear friends, the Austrians' metallics, (which operation of finance secured my still stronger adherence to the chorus of a clap-trap song current about 'forty-eight ; that I had "rather be an Englishman :) " Lobb stopped suddenly, however, in the midst of his exposition of the mysteries of agio and decimals ; and, bending his bushy eyebrows upon me, said : "De blace vor de peef is in the Rue Pictonpin." (He pronounced it Biedonbin.) I bowed my head meekly in acquiescence to the enunciation of this assertion, whereupon he continued concisely, "Friday, half bast vive," and thereupon plunged into a history of the credit foncier and the Danish five per cents.

I noticed that Lobb, for the next day or two, rather avoided me than otherwise, and that he was studiously chary of any allusion to the Rue Pictonpin ; but, as I knew him, though what is termed a "close customer," to be a man of his word, I was punctual to my appointment on Friday evening. Lobb was to be found at a great banking-house in the Rue de la Paix,—a suite of palatial apartments, with polished floors, stuccoed ceilings, a carpeted and gilt-balustraded staircase, walnut-tree desks, velvet fauteuils, moderator lamps, a porter's lodge furnished as splendidly as an English stock-broker's parlour ; everything, in short, that could conduce to splendour, except money. None of that was to be seen. To one accustomed to the plethoric amount of outward and visible wealth in an English banking-house,—the heaps of sovereigns, the great scales, the piles of bank-notes, the orangetawny money-bags, the shovels dinted in the service of Plutus, the burly porters, and range of fire-buckets even (suggestive of the wealth of the Indies to be protected), the counting-houses of a Parisian banker present a Barmecide feast of riches. In place, too, of the strong-backed ledgers, the fat cash-books, and fatter cashiers of Messrs. Cræsus and Co., the French seem to keep their voluminous accounts in meagre little pamphlets like schoolboys' copy-books ; and the clerks are hungry-looking men with beards. Fancy Messrs. Cræsus confiding an account to a clerk with a chin-tip ! As far as I am able to judge, all the disposable bullion in Paris is displayed in little shop-windows like greengrocer's stalls, for the special admiration of the Palais Royal loungers, and the accommodation of any Englishman in want of change for a five-pound note. At the banking-houses, the cash-box is an Eau de

Cologne box, and the principal amount of business transacted seems to consist in stamping bits of paper, executing elaborate paraphes or flourishes to signatures, shifting sand about on wet ink, and asking for lights for cigars.

I found Lobb, that master of finance, peaceably employed in his bureau, eating two sous worth of hot chestnuts over a bronze stove of classic design. Nobody came for any money ; and, peeping into one or two other bureaux, as we left, I caught a glimpse of another clerk signing his name all over a sheet of blotting-paper, whistling as he scribbled for want of thought, and of another absorbedly twisting his moustaches before a pier-glass. (A pier-glass in a bank !) Yet banking hours were not over,—they never are in France,—and I dare say business to the amount of some hundred thousands of francs was done before they closed. A shop-boy let us out ; a bullet-headed fellow with a perpetual grin, a blue bib and apron, and who, Lobb informed me, was even more stupid than he looked. He was reading a novel. And of such is a Parisian bank.

It was a pouring wet night—the rain coming down not in the sudden sluicelike, floodgate English fashion, but in a concentrated, compact, fine unceasing descent, cautiously and remorselessly, like the sand in an hour-glass, or the conversation of a fluent and well-informed bore. The mud had come to stop a long night, and leaped up at you, even to your eyebrows, like a dog glad to recognise a friend. With the rain had come his inseparable French friends, bad odours and biting wind. They had the pavement all to themselves, and tossed the passengers about like ships in the ocean. There were some thousands of ankles abroad, for those who cared to see them ; and the tortures of the inquisition had been revived, in the shape of numberless umbrellas, which were progued in your eyes, jammed into your ribs, thrust between your legs, and gave off cascades, dexterously, down the nape of your neck. Prudent people had all sought safe anchorage in the passages ; the wealthy had chartered carriages, and were deciding the knotty point as to which is the pleasanter, —to run, or to be run over. I met a lamentable dog in the Rue Montmartre, wet through. He was evidently homeless, and was going towards the Cité, perhaps to sell himself to a chiffonnier, probably to drown himself.

I believe that there is no such street in Paris as the Rue Pictonpin, and that Lobb, for some occult reasons of his own, gave me a fabulous address ; for I never was able to find out the place afterwards by daylight ; nor is its name to be discovered in any of the maps of the twelve arrondissements of Paris. We wandered for, it appeared to me, hours ; stumbling, splashing, through streets which knew not foot pave-

ments, which yet boasted the mediæval gutter—a Niagara of mud—which were villanous in aspect, and vile in smell. The lantern of the rag-picker crossed our path like a Will-o'-the-wisp, viragoes quarrelled at the doors of charcoal-sheds, portefaix tottered by with gigantic sacks, like corpses, on their backs; that novelty in civilised Paris, the drunken man, staggered out of the wine-shop, and asked us, hiccuping, what o'clock it was; and now and then some great lumbering omnibus with red eyes like a blood-shot demon's swooped by, driving us against the wall, and casting mud into our teeth. I was just on the point of revolting, and telling Lobb that I would see his beef hung before I would go any further, when he stopped (the cautious man was enveloped in waterproofing, and I had a great coat like a sponge), and said,

"Dis is de peef shop."

We passed under a scowling archway, into a court-yard, seemingly opening into half-a-dozen others. There was some gas about; but the dust must have permeated the pipes, for it blinked and glimmered dubiously, and seemed disposed to burn blue. Every-where on the wall, from the basement to where the hideous height of stone and plaster was lost in darkness, there were stuck those bewildering placards about the names and occupations of the tenants of the different floors, that drive a man mad at Paris, and send him up to the sixth storey in quest of a tailor who lives on the ground floor. Of course there was a hairdresser in the house; of course there were "modes" on the second floor; of course there was a dentist, whose hideous armoury of dead men's fangs and waxen gums grinned at you from a glass case; of course there was a professor of photography; together with the *dépôt* of some *société générale* for the sale of medicated chocolate, or camphorated pomatum, hygienic asphalte, Athenian eye-water, philanthropic corn-plaster, or similar egregious excrescences of civilisation. No French house could be complete without those branches of industry. But the beef was in the second floor along with the modes; at least a hot, drowsy, meaty smell began in the court-yard, and ended there; so I followed it and Lobb, irrigating the stairs involuntarily as I went with the drippings from my garments.

I did not arrive in the most joyous frame of mind; my very appetite was washed out of me. Nor did it increase my jocundity of mood, when—pushing aside a green baize-covered door—Lobb preceded me into a bleak ante-chamber, very cold and barren, where there were some bare deal boards on tressels and a cemetery of empty bottles.

"Sometime dey are zo vull, we dine here," whispered Lobb.

I shuddered. I would as soon have dined in a dead-house. But there was a curtain

hanging across a doorway, which he drew aside, and then I entered into the real temple where the beef was to be.

Silence, deep, dead, marrow-freezing silence! From the fifty guests or so, at least; but, from their fifty knives and forks a dull clicking; and, now and then, some smothered sounds of gurgling, and, once in every five minutes on an average, subdued clatter of plates. But not a word. Motus.

There were an outer and an inner saloon, vast, lofty, well-proportioned; but indescribably faded, tarnished. On the old grimy walls, bedewed with the tears of generations of damp, there were here and there painted panels, surrounded by festoons of ghastly flowers; and, in the panels, were mildewed Cupids, and cracked shepherds making love to washed-out shepherdesses. There were gilt cornices; and, on the ceiling was painted the apotheosis of somebody, obscured, bleared, almost undiscoverable beneath the smoke of a century, and the fumes of a hecatomb of beef. There was a mirror over one mantel, surrounded by obsolete framework; and, on the shelf, a lugubrious clock, with a heavy mass of carving representing Orestes pursued by the Eumenides, or Clytemnestra slaying Agamemnon, or some equally lively classical episode, ticked dolorously. There were four long tables covered with doubtful table-cloths; three full of guests eating with gloomy avidity, the fourth empty. Dim oil lamps burnt around. Nobody offered us a seat; nobody seemed to acknowledge our presence; no waiter so much as looked at us. One man only, a bald-headed biped in a long coat, who was standing by the funereal clock, took out an ebony snuff-box, just glanced at me, as if to tell me that if I thought he were about to offer me a pinch, I was very much mistaken, took a double pinch himself and sneezed. By Lobb's direction I took a seat at the vacant table, as near the centre as possible. From minute to minute there dropped in men in cloaks, men in paletots, men in spencers, men in many-collared carrieks. Some were decorated; a few wore moustaches; but the vast majority were old and clean shaven, and looked like men of the first empire. One little old man, with a round scalp polished like a billiard ball, wore a coat-collar of unusual height and stiffness, for the purpose, I believe to this day, of concealing a pigtail, which he persisted in wearing, but was ashamed to show. Nobody took any notice of us; they did not even bring us bread or wine. There were knives and forks and napkins, but one cannot eat these things. This could not be a dining-house. It was the Silent Tomb.

It was, in sober reality, though it looked so much like a family vault, a table d'hôte at thirty-six sous, held in a dilapidated ci-devant nobleman's mansion, and of the order of

cookery known as the cuisine bourgeoise. The rule was, that as the tables filled, and not till then, the dinner was served; so that if you arrived a moment after the number of occupants of table number one was completed, you had, very probably, to wait a quarter of an hour before table number two was gladdened with the joyful appearance of the soup.

It seemed to me, on this occasion, as if I should have to wait all night. Lobb relapsed into mental calculations—possibly about Chilian bonds (deferred), and I was left entirely to my own resources. The little man with the supposed pigtail, who was my neighbour, was either hopelessly deaf or obstinately taciturn. To my remarks about the weather he answered not a word. A man opposite me with a large chest, a flapped waistcoat, and the face of a horse (his wig was brushed up over his eyes like blinkers), leaned over the table, and fixed his gelatinous eyes—not on me—but on the wall behind me; till he filled me with a vague terror, and an invincible tendency to picture him changing into the figure-head of a ship bearing down on me to transfix and scuttle me. A palsied dotard with a head like a pear grown on one side—and yet he was the most brilliant wit of the party—wagged his toothless jaws, and made a chop at me with his knife—so it struck my fancy at least—although, very likely, poor old man, he was only hungry and impatient for his dinner. And the grim silence of the men, and the unholy sounds made by the inanimate objects, and the dreadful ticking of the clock, beating the Dead March in Saul on the muffled-drum of my ear, so fretted, harried, exasperated, and crazed me, that I would have given a hundred francs for a woman to enter the room; five hundred for permission to burst into a howl, to sing, to stamp on someone's toes, to send a bottle flying at the head of the man with the figure-head face,—to do anything to provoke a commotion in this dreadful, dreadful, Silent Tomb.

There were thirteen guests mustered out of the twenty-four, when I thought that I must either speak or die. Lobb had slipped out to confer with the landlady (there was a landlady), and I had not even the consolation of abusing him for bringing me to such a place. I tried to divert myself by conjuring up images of what the grim restaurant had been a hundred years ago. To what marquis, Fermier Général, or Sous-Intendant the great hotel had belonged; who painted those stained panels, who that misty apotheosis. Of what gay scenes; what nights of revelry, these uncommunicative halls of gloom had been spectators. Some one must have talked there at some time or other; the walls must once have echoed to the laughter of the marchionesses in brocaded sacks, of marquisses with red-heeled shoes, with the madrigals of enamoured chevaliers in bag-wigs, the gal-

lantries of grey mousquetaires, the pert sayings of spruce little abbés, the epigrams of snuffy wits who drank too much coffee and wrote for the *Encyclopédie*. Oh for my grandmother's ghost, to revisit, for a moment, the haunts of her contemporaries—if she would but open her mouth and chatter!

At extremest length, when the wheel in a cistern there seemed about to make its last revolution, Lobb returned; the last man of the twenty-four indispensable guests took his place, and a solemn lady in black—not my grandmother's ghost, though she would not have dressed the character badly—but the mistress of the establishment, glided into the room. Then a spruce man in raven black, who considerably resembled an undertaker, took his seat by me as chairman, and proceeded to ladle the soup out of a huge tureen.

I had grown so accustomed by this time to take the Silent Tomb for granted, and to consider myself pro-tem. as a member of a burial-club, that, had a boiled death's head with parsley and butter formed the first course, I don't think I should have evinced much surprise. I contemplated, too, with a contented sort of stony apathy, four waiters, like mutes, who came up, as I imagined (my retina must have been affected by this time), perpendicularly behind as many chairs. I suppose they placed the array of half-bottlesfull of wine which suddenly appeared on the table, and which were not there before. I did not care to inquire, neither did it much matter, whether it were by human agency or not, that a small clothes-basketful of household bread was passed around. One thing, however, became manifest. If the guests were dumb, they were not at least paralysed; for a fiercer or more active attack upon a bread-basket I never saw. The majority took two pieces; and the reputed possessor of the pigtail carried off a whole armful of the staff of life.

I am bound to admit that the victuals were very good. The soup was made from meat. Plates of carrots and spinach were handed round for admixture in the broth, thus giving us the opportunity of converting it into a Jullienne on a large scale. Then came the old, original, cuisine Bourgeoise Bouillon Bœuf—fresh beef, boiled, in large stringy lumps, with a coronal of fat, like Doctor Sacheverel's curly wig. With mustard, oil, and pepper, this was not bad. I could have pronounced it true beef; I could have praised the roast mutton that followed (a leg cut up into hunks and handed round), the salad, the haricots, the compote of pears and the Roquefort cheese that concluded this plain, substantial, and, on the whole, cheap meal (for everybody was helped twice, and there was an indiscreet amount of bread consumed), if the people would but have spoken. But they were dumb to the last. One

solitary gleam of life (as connected with Mammon) there was, when the solemn lady came round after the bouilli, and collected our respective thirty-six sous in a hand-basket. The jingling did me good; but we soon relapsed into our old Shillibeer jog-trot. There was the clicking of the knives and forks, and the occasional smothered rattle of the plates; and the funeral-baked meats did furnish forth the table-d'hôte, and the only thing wanting to complete this gastronomical Golgotha was the statue of the Commendatore, from Seville, whispering across the table that he was the father of Doña Elvira, and did you know if Don Juan were there, because he had an appointment to sup with him?

The guests were no ghosts, though. Ghosts!—wolves, rather. I never saw such a set of trenchermen. I am certain that every man there present must have put under his waistcoat at least thirty-seven sous worth of solid food. The concern must be a loss. The Silent Tomb can't pay. Perhaps the proprietress is a widow with large revenues, who likes to spend it on these taciturn men. Perhaps it is a tontine, and the surviving members eat up the deceased. But it is certain—though I should like to renew my acquaintance with the beef—that I can never dine there again. It is not good to eat and say nothing. Even the pig grunts over the trough. Shall we be less sociable than the pig?

By the time we had finished dinner, and as I turned to give the waiter two sous (who, perceiving my intent, and being plainly a misanthrope, dropped his napkin and fled into the next room), the table opposite to us had attained its complement, and an exactly similar dinner was commencing thereat. Do they never stop dicing at the Silent Tomb? Is it always turn and turn about? Table full and table empty? Soup and bully, salad and roast? Will it ever be so till death slips off his waiter's jacket, and the beef shall give place to bones?

I dexterously gave Lobb the slip in the court-yard, and there was a coolness between us for some days. I plunged into the noisiest café I could find, where there was a crash of dominoes, a charivari of cups and saucers, violent disputes between Jules and Alphonse over sugar-and-water, and endless shriekings of and for waiters. I went to the Bouffes-Parisiennes after that, and was quite delighted with the noisiness of the music and the absurdity of a pantomime; and I walked home singing the Sire de Framboisy the whole way. But I had thenightmare before morning.

As already stated, I have never been able to find the Rue Pictonpin since. I do not like to ask Lobb (though we have been reconciled over kirschwasser, for reasons; and were it not that I know him to be a man of mortal mould, and an exemplary clerk in a banking-house, I should be tempted to believe that I had been spirited away to

some cave of glamour, and that I had feasted in the Island of Saint Brandan, or spent the evening with the Adalantado of the Seven Cities.

But I was not disheartened. There was more beef, I knew, in Paris than had yet come out of it. I sought a great beef establishment in the narrow street that runs parallel to the east side of the Palais Royal—a time-honoured place of refection by the sign of the Bœuf à-la-mode. But I found beef no longer in fashion there. The waiter, who was far better dressed than I was, and who was the possessor of a watch-chain I can never hope to have the fellow of, looked down upon me, and thought me a poor-spirited creature—un homme de rien—because I would not have oysters and white wine before dinner. To ask for beef at the Bœuf à-la-mode was, I found, about the same as asking for a cup of coffee and a thin slice of bread and butter at the London Coffee House. Then I relapsed into the semi-English houses again. At the John Bull; at the True Roast Beef; at the Renown of Roast Beef. But truth was a fiction and renown a sham. They gave me flaps of flesh, that made me ill; they fed me with promises, and the performance was but gravy and sinew. I wandered in a desert of restaurants, and came upon no oasis of beef. I began to despond.

But hence, loathed Melancholy—away with thee, Penseroso! See, the Allegro comes tripping soft with sweetest Lydian measure. Here is Bully Beef in the Hall of Montesquieu!

The illustrious author of the *Esprit des Lois* has given his name to, or has had it taken for, a vast saloon on the ground-floor of a street called the Cour des Fontaines, leading from the Palais Royal to the Galerie Véro-Dodat, where all old Paris men will remember so well M. Aubert's caricature shop, and its admiring crowd of loafers and pickpockets, staring at the inimitable pear-shaped portraits of Louis Philippe, and the cent et un Robert Macaires by Daumier. The Hall of Montesquieu has had its mutabilities. I remember it a dancing saloon, well conducted, though the price of admittance was but fifty cents. I have seen there a journeyman butcher in his professional blue frock dancing the Cellarius with a lady in puce velvet edged with fur, and a pink bonnet (she was, I declare, my washerwoman), with a gravity and decorum that showed that he knew his position, and hers, and respected both. There used to be a waiter there—or, rather, an overlooker, a sort of shop-walker, whose duty it was to pace the galleries moodily, and to cry out to couples who were sitting at the tables, "Il faut consommer, messieurs;" which signified that, if they took seats, they must also take refreshment. With this unchanging, lugubrious cry, he always put me in mind of the Trappist, crying "Brothers, we must die!"

He never said anything else ; I don't believe he could ; but I have an idea that he had been an idiot from his youth upwards, and that this one poll-parrot cry had been taught him, and that this was all he knew. During the short-lived Republic the hall was one of the fiercest of political clubs ; and I have no doubt that my friend the butcher, repudiating the puerilities of the Cellarius, spoke his mind out stoutly on the necessity of proclaiming every master butcher an enemy of mankind, and of having the professional chopper used on the heads of the syndics. After the Republic had fallen through, the hall fell into the dominion of Terpsichore again ; but its choreographic prestige was gone ; and I have often seen the most frenzied mazourkas performed to no better audience than two sergeants de ville, the pompiers on duty, a dyspeptic American, and a solemn Englishman. After this, there was a species of assault of arms in the hall, after the fashion of our Saville House. I have not been told whether the Saladin feat, or the severisation of the quarter of mutton, took place ; but there was fencing, and much wrestling, and the exercise of the savate, and a series of eccentric gymnastics with gloves, in which paralysis, St. Vitus's dance, the clog hornpipe, mesmeric passes, and the attitudes of Mr. Merryman when he asks you how you are to-morrow, were oddly mingled, and which was called *La Beox Anglaise*, and was believed by the spectators to be an exact reproduction of an English pugilistic encounter. I sincerely hope that our chivalrous neighbours may never become greater adepts in that brutal and debasing pastime.

Subsequently I lost sight of the Hall of Montesquieu for a long time. Hearing even that the Docks de la Toilette had been established in the Cour des Fontaines, I concluded that the hall had been pulled down, or converted perhaps into a dry dock for coats, perhaps into a basin for pantaloons. But I suddenly heard that it had been doing a great business in the Beef line, throughout the whole time of the Exhibition of Industry ; that it had been dining its two and three thousand a day ; and that it was now the *Etablissement du Bouillon Bœuf*, with succursals in the Rue Coquillière, the Rue de la Monnaie, and the Rue Beauregard.

I was off to the Cour des Fontaines immediately. There was a great photographic establishment somewhere above the hall, and effigies of scowling captains of dragoons, high-cheekboned ladies, and epileptic children, were hung on the entrance pillars in the usual puzzling manner ; but there was no mistaking the gastronomic character which the place had assumed. A species of triumphal altar had been erected in a niche in front, and on it were piled huge joints of beef, legs and shoulders of mutton, geese, turkeys, fowls, sausages, apples, pears of preternatural size, and real venison, furred, leathern-

nosed and antlered. There was an oyster woman—a belle écaillière—before the door (the majority of belle écaillières are sixty years of age, and take snuff, even as the most numerous portion of the vivandières in the army are wrinkled and ill-favoured). There was a great running in and out of waiters, a great ingress and egress of diners through swing doors ; the whole place was full of life and movement, and the promise of beef.

On entering (it was very like entering the Crystal Palace, so great was the throng, so large and lively the vista beyond), a courteous man gave me, with a bow, a carte of the viands obtainable, with the day of the month affixed, and blank spaces left for the quantity consumed. Then I passed on into the well-remembered hall ; but ah, how changed !

Prettily decorated, brilliantly lighted, crowded as of yore ; but the orchestra and the throng of dancers were replaced by long lanes of marble tables, guiltless of tablecloths, covered with edibles, and at which perhaps four hundred persons were busily dining. In the centre were two immense erections, monuments covered with enamelled plates, and surmounted with pretty parterres of flowers. There were some encaustic portraits of waiters flying about with smoking dishes painted on the enamelled plates, giving the erections the appearance of vast mausoleums, erected to the memory of departed garçons and cooks who had fallen before too fierce fires, and too hungry customers. But they were not cenotaphs, I discovered afterwards, but merely the cooking apparatus of the *Bouillon Bœuf* ; for round the base were ledges with the customary furnace holes and stewpans ; and round this again, at a distance of a few feet, an oval counter piled with plates, where the waiters gave their orders and received their dishes. In the space between pullulated numerous cooks, male and female—the latter mostly very pretty—ah ! roguish *Bouillon Bœuf* !—all as busy as bees stirring saucepans, dishing up vegetables, ladling out soup, and apportioning modicums of stew. And there was a loud cry afloat of “*Versez ;*” for many of the four hundred were taking their coffee after dinner, and waiters scudded, skated rather than walked, from table to table, and from huge coffee-pots frothed up the smoking substitute for mocha. Pour on and be merry ; rattle knives and forks ; chatter grisettes ; hoarsely order *bifteq pour deux*, oh waiter ; gesticulate, discourse vehemently, oh moustached men ; querulously demand more soup and drum impatiently on your plates with spoons, oh little children in bibs, brought to dine at the *Bouillon Bœuf* by your fond parents ; ring out, ye echoes, till the glazed roof vibrates ; for here is life, here health, cheerfulness, enjoyment, and be hanged to the Silent Tomb !

As there was rather too much life and merriment below, however, for a man who

wished to philosophise upon four hundred fellow creatures at their meals, I went upstairs into the gallery, which was partitioned off into boxes, where there was another kitchen, though on a smaller scale to the one below, and where there were perhaps a hundred and fifty diners more. Sitting down at one of the little marble tables I made the astonishing discovery that Eau de Selz—the French substitute for soda-water—was laid on to the premises, like gas, or New River water. An Eau de Selz pillar, neatly surmounted with a blue cut-glass knob, and an Eau de Selz double robinet or tap, came through the centre of each table; and on reference to the carte I found that for ten centimes—a penny—you might have as much of the Eau de Selz on tap as ever you liked—blow yourself up with aerated water, if you were disposed so to do. Where was the reservoir? There, yonder, in one of the mausoleums. How was it made? What was it made of? Aye, there was the rub! I am no chemist; and lest from one of these metallic taps I should draw forth a solution of some noxious carbonate, sulphate, acetate, or phosphate nauseous to the taste, and inimical to the coats of the stomach, I refrained from the Eau de Selz at discretion at once and for ever.

I must say this for the credit of the Bouillon Bœuf, that the celerity and agility of its waiters are beyond criticism and compare. I was no sooner seated than a light-hearted child of Gaul, with a bright eye, and a chin-tuft, skipped up to me, brushed the table spotlessly clean (I did not mind his whisking the crumbs into my eyes), and blithely asked me what I would have. Soup he had already settled in his mind I should have; and producing a little pencil, attached by a silken cord to his waistcoat button, had set down a great black tick against the soup line in my carte. Bouillon was the word. Bouilli afterwards of course. How much wine? half a bottle. Would I have a table-napkin? certainly. Bread? of course (I could have brought both myself). Four more ticks were jotted down on my carte and the jocund youth went skipping off, twiddling his pencil like the dancing Faun his flute.

Perhaps he was one of the departed celebrities of Montesquieu when it was a dancing hall. But enough. Before I had well begun to speculate upon him he was back with my soup, my napkin, and my wine. After the discussion of the potage, and pending the arrival of the beef, I studied the carte, and profited much thereby. I learnt that soup cost twopence, bouilli twopence-halfpenny, roast meat and ragouts threepence, vegetables twopence, bread a penny, a napkin a penny, Eau de Selz (as I have already said) a penny, wine fivepence the half-bottle, though half or

even a quarter of that quantity was obtainable, and other articles of consumption in reasonable proportion. Not very Sardapalian, these items, certainly; and yet the company seemed to be not only composed of the pettier middle class, but of very many persons in what may be termed easy circumstances. There were no blouses, but a good number of plain female caps; but there were also a fair sprinkling of red ribbons at button-holes, and of bonnets with artificial flowers under them. Let me add that in the motley throng, order, good behaviour, and good humour reigned unvaryingly.

I think my dinner cost me elevenpence. I would rather not be questioned about the beef; but what can you expect for five sous? The place was very cheap, and very gay, and exceeding curious for those who liked to look at men and women in their ways. The waiter's service was gratuitous—ostensibly so at least. You did not pay him the reckoning; but descending to the contrôle presented your carte to an elegantly dressed lady who added up the items, softly but audibly, and told you the amount. This you paid. Then she stamped the carte (oh, nation of stampers!) and delivered your carte again to a checktaker. All this light and space, all this life and merriment, all this beef and bouilli, all this Selzer water at discretion, all this stamping and restamping, and all for elevenpence.

The next day—a red-letter day—my friend, Pecuniosus, who is wealthy, said, "Come and breakfast." We breakfasted at that Alhambra-like café, at the corner of the Chaussée d'Antin, where millionnaires sup, where your cup is filled from silver coffee-pots worth a thousand francs each, and reckonings are paid in bank notes. We had the enlivening wine of Thorins. We had eggs, poached with asparagus tips, we had jumped kidneys, and we had a Chateaubriand—a steak—ah, so tender! ah, so exquisitely done! It was delicious, it was unapproachable, it melted in the mouth; but I still adhere to my former assertion. There is no beef in Paris. I have not ten thousand a year; Pecuniosus does not ask me to breakfast every morning; and this was not eating beef; it was eating gold.

So I am yet open to continue my travels in search of beef, and expect to be on the move before long. I have been told that in Abyssinia they bring the ox to the door, and you cut your steak off hot from the living animal, on the cut and come again principle; but apart from the cruelty of the thing, a man cannot be too cautious in receiving statements about Abyssinia. Still, I yearn for beef; and if any gentleman hear of palatable ox-flesh down Otaheite way, I shall be happy to record my notions of a steak in the South Seas.

HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

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HORSE-EATING.

THE pleasurable arts do not advance slowly and surely, like the humdrum march of the hour-hand kept in motion by the weights of an eight-day clock: they do not grow with the equable, steady, persevering growth of a rich piece of pasture-land during a chilly summer; but they jump onwards by fits and starts. They make a sudden leap from time to time, and astound you with some unexpected development; they resemble the banana which, in a single night, shot a vigorous leaf through the roof of a greenhouse; or the flower-stem of the American aloe, which heats itself by getting up-stairs so fast, and will even let you see it grow, if you look close and sharp. I say, the arts which adorn and sweeten life, jerk their fruits around you when you least look for them; as the noli-me-tangere balsam shoots its seeds; as the squirting cucumber spurts out its whole contents, liquid and solid, all together; or as that natural alarum—the Hura crepitans or Sand-box of Jamaica—whose large circular seed-vessel splits into a number of pieces, and scatters its contents with a sound loud enough to wake a sleeping botanist.

In horticulture, time was when British orchards boasted a fine collection of crabs, sloes, hazel-nuts, and nothing else. By-and-by, a certain Lucullus—here's to his memory, in kirschwasser!—brought cherries from Armenia, and we received them second-hand, by which, many a female possessor of a wheelbarrow and a pair of scales has turned many an honest, and many a questionable penny. Then, Queen Elizabeth sent to Flanders weekly—weather permitting—for turnips, cabbages, and salad, a shameful innovation! an unpardonable affront to native market-gardening talent! but still a grand start; because people began to wonder and consider whether salad, cabbages, and turnips wouldn't grow in England, although conservative horticulturists insisted that they neither could nor should. Mr. John Tradescant traded with America; and, though it was no part of his business, he brought home sundry flowers from Virginia, which he cultivated in his garden, in Holborn. The pretty border plants we owe to him, were admired novelties in his day; and they helped to stir up the

same revolution in the floricultural mind, as naughty Bess had worked in the case of vegetables.

Mr. John Evelyn made and marked an epoch, by his translation of the Compleat Gardener, by M. de la Quintinye, chief director of all the gardens of the French King, by his *Acetaria*, or Discourse of Sallets, and by his invention or amplification of that very curious apartment, a glasshouse for plants! Then, Captain Cook and Sir Joseph Banks set up George the Third with a good stock of geraniums and Botany-bays, as the gardeners call them; which were the foundation of the grand collection at Kew, besides giving us New Zealand spinach, and teaching us to defy scurvy with soup made of grass and other wild herbs. Then, Mr. Curtis presented us with sea-kale; thereby exciting the bitter jealousy of vigorous forcers of asparagus. Then, Mr. Myatt had the audacity to present the world with a physic-plant, by way of a treat. He sent his two sons to the Borough Market with five bunches of rhubarb, of which they could only sell three—and very well off they might think themselves in getting rid of the greater half of their strange and outlandish apothecaries' leaves. But how would you manage this Spring, epicurean reader, were an imperial ukase to abolish rhubarb-tart utterly? Was not rhubarb-tart an immense stride in advance?

To finish with flowers; have you the least idea of the exquisite bouquets (hardy, cheap, and cultivable by all who can scratch a bit of cottage garden with an edentate rake) with which we have been pelted and overwhelmed by such men as Douglas, Lobb, and Fortune, these last few years? as if we were prima-donnas, or dancers, who had just finished a brilliant bravura, or a fascinating fandango. Why, everybody may have flowers now; and, in short, flowers are become perfectly vulgar. Gentility will soon vote it bad taste to encourage anything in the shape of a blossom; china-roses will be considered low; deutzias and dielytras an actual disgrace. A floral Almacks is virtually founded by the modern assemblage of aerial orchidaceous plants. Does not the presence of these vegetable serene-highnesses constitute a good long stride into novelty?

In music, we have had equally unlooked-

for changes, not to say ameliorations. To be sure, the Bagpipes, and the Cat and Fiddle remain; but mark how Nebuchadnezzar's dulcimer has been successively transformed into the virginals, and the spinnet and the harpsichord, for which Mr. Handel wrote lessons—lessons so difficult that Dr. Johnson on one occasion wished them impossible. Then burst forth the pianoforte, with its glittering and sportive notes; whereon the boy Mozart and the youthful Clementi bewildered and delighted all Europe, not without suspicion that the diamond ring worn by the former was a magical charm, bewitched and uncanny. Musical style, too, has bounded forward with hop, skip, and jump. Corelli's jigs startled his contemporaries like the bursting of the balsam seed-vessel, when ripe; Handel's Waterpiece may typify the surprise caused by handling a squirting cucumber; while the Jamaica sand-box makes its loudest explosions in Meyerbeer's Crociato and Robert the Devil. Analogous are the bold and fitful advances which the culinary art has made. Really Russian encroachments have laid hands, on all sides, on whatever consolidated the power of the cook, or tended to raise his dignity as an artist. He has been allowed to seize all sorts of material guarantees, without a single remonstrance being raised, or without suffering any check from an alliance of western gastronomers. On the contrary, we look on with indifference, nay, with approbation. The oldest county family in England, even though descended from the Druids, would hardly invite a dinner-party, to feast off the finest of acorns and the clearest of water. The great, great-grandsons of Scandinavian seakings don't pass the mead and metheglin at dessert, nor do they fuddle themselves in the morning with mum. Our modern Ulysseses, Ajaxes, and Hector's do not kill their own mutton on the spot, and roast it forthwith. Talking of killing, what a wonderful step in civilisation were sausages! On what temple of fame is inscribed, in golden letters, the immortal name of the discoverer of sausages? Did Homer ever taste sausages? or the High-Priest of Isis and Osiris? or Josephus?—but I forget, he was a Jew; though that is no reason, because he might have called them minced veal. Was Juvenal cognisant of their flavour? I think not; for, if he had been, he would not have been so hard-mouthed on the luxury of his age. If sausages existed during the dark ages, a thousand to one they must have been invented before-hand. Sausages are by no means an obvious idea. To purify the most repulsive parts of an animal, to fill them with a highly-artificial compound which should ravish all palates, and silence all objections, surely required long thought and deep searching-out, illumined by a ray of genius. There is a development of the sausage, unknown to stay-at-home Britons, whose

light will burst upon them one of these days. If you want to forestal the coming stranger, go to Cherbourg and eat andouillettes.

Fain would my pen descendant on the glories of, and celebrate the foundation laid—the possibilities opened—by the man who ate the first oyster, by him who taught the nation to pickle capers, to smoke hams, to corn rounds of beef, to make lobster mayonnaise, char-treuse of game, trifle, plum-pudding, and anchovy-toast. The name of sandwich deserves the reverential remembrance of luncers, pic-nickers, ball-supper-eaters, and gadders-about in general. But close we, O Culinary Muse, this Pindaric survey of eatables, to fix our undivided attention on the brilliant prospect now flashing on the kitchen-world, in consequence of the resources lately opened by the philosophic band of Hippophagists.

The two Greek words, hippos, a horse, and phagein, to eat, make, when put together, the fact—which, we are told, ought to be the custom and the practice, from eighteen hundred and fifty-six henceforward—which is styled by our brave allies hippophagie, or horse-eating. The subject at this moment is being seriously and earnestly discussed by the leading men of science in France; and, what is more, they follow up precept by example. The innovation is neither a joke, nor a wild, unreasonable scheme. There is no idea of depriving bullocks, sheep, and pigs of the honour of supplying us with roast meat and boiled on the majority of ordinary occasions. There is no project put forth of a Société Anonyme, with thousands of shares of a hundred francs each, for the breeding of ponies for the shambles. Stout cobs and Suffolk punches are far too serviceable to the human race to be stalled up to fatten, as the destiny to which they are born. The horse is the companion, the fellow-labourer, of man; and that must ever be his first vocation. But, say the innovators, there are millions of men, women, and children in France, who never taste animal food, or only in infinitesimal portions; whose stature, strength, and health are the worse for the want. On the other hand, there are thousands of horses annually slain—young ones, with broken limbs, and old ones past profitable service—whose perfectly wholesome and palatable flesh is utterly wasted; whose loss, without a pun, is a dead loss to their owner; and who make no other material return for their rearing and keep than the comparatively trifling value of their skin, hoofs, and bones, which would remain equally available were their meat consumed. Then, there are the interests of other parties to be consulted; I mean, of course, those of the horses themselves; and on this point, surely, all the animals' friend societies must vote with the hippophagists. What is the fate of a declining horse? We have beheld it figured in the story of the High-mettled Racer; from bad to worse—from sharp stage-coach work (and diligences still exist) to

carting stone and sand under savage drivers; ending by dropping down on the road exhausted, and by dying in harness. Were I a horse, with such a prospect, my adhesion to hippophagy would be very emphatic. How infinitely better for an aged hack to be fatted and to live in clover during his declining days than to be starved, beaten, and compelled to drag burdens very much beyond his strength. Authorities say, that in order that horseflesh should attain its proper excellence, the animal ought to be kept in repose during the last six or seven weeks of his existence—a longer period of good-living and ease would give a corresponding improvement of condition. This system, if general, would, in fact, amount to the pensioning off of all our horses past service for a definite instead of an indefinite length of time, to be terminated by sudden death from the butcher's hand instead of by the slow decay of expiring old age. If it will pay to fatten an ox who has served his time in the plough, or a cow who has fulfilled her contributions to the dairy, it would also remunerate the grazier to fatten a horse past work, supposing that his carcase could be disposed of as readily as those of the ruminants.

And what prevents it? Prejudice, and nothing else! the same prejudice which makes the English refuse to taste frogs and escargots, though both are esteemed and expensive dishes on the continent; which makes the Orientals reject the flesh of the hog, though here we know how good it is; which causes, in short, nearly one-half the world to loathe nutriment which is greedily consumed by the other half; which has given rise to the true, but unreasonable, fact, that one man's meat is another man's poison. Starving Irishmen would not eat Indian corn. And on what solid base is this prejudice founded? on custom—on the want of being used to the strange aliment—and on nothing more; for young children, of whatever nation, to whom frogs, the meal of maize, and pork are given to eat, relish them as if they were not regarded by multitudes as a pollution, a horror, and a sin.

I think that in these remarks there are no false premises, nor begging of the question; in that case, it can do us no harm merely to listen to what the hippophagists have to say. One learned and powerful advocate, M. Isidore Geoffroy St. Hilaire, professor of zoology at the Museum of Paris, has endeavoured, by means of his public lectures, to bring the question of the use of horseflesh to an affirmative solution, which he hopes will arrive at a not-distant future; because, as he remarks, the agitation is made at a time when the alimentary supply is more and more narrowly hemmed in by the dilemma of insufficiency or of sophistication.

Almost all our auxiliary animals, says the professor, are, at the same time, fit for aliment. This fact admits of easy ex-

planation. By multiplying these animals, man at the same time creates an immense fund of strength and a great quantity of alimentary matter; and he is induced to profit by the latter when the former are defective or have become useless. Why, then, should not the horse—an animal of lofty stature, and one of our most important auxiliaries—why should not the horse, or, to speak more correctly, why should the horse no longer be devoted to the feeding of the people?

At the present day, except in a few scattered districts, nothing except his strength is demanded of the horse in return for the food which he consumes. When the horse approaches decrepitude, or is the victim of any accident which diminishes his services or renders them impossible, he is a capital on the point of being sunk without return; a few odds and ends of his remains are all that are turned to any use. Nevertheless, his flesh would offer a valuable resource for alimentation, did not a deeply-rooted prejudice discredit it in the public mind, by attributing to it unpleasant circumstances from which, in fact, it is exempt. Buffon himself did not hesitate to condemn it, as a very inferior aliment; but undoubtedly the great naturalist was inspired on that subject by the general opinion, and only spoke by hearsay; for it is scarcely probable that a joint of horseflesh ever figured, as a dish, on the table of the Seigneur of Montbard. There are not less than two millions of horses in France. Whatever small portion of all these animals is used for food, is very trifling in quantity, and is always served up by fraudulent means. In Paris there is a daily clandestine trade in horseflesh, both for the restaurants, who serve it as fillet of venison; and for the poor, who in that case pay for it more than its real market-value as meat. A possible result of the clandestine sale is, that glandered horses may be brought to market; and it is now an established fact that that terrible disease, the glanders, is communicable to the human system. But, by a public and open sale, under the same authorised inspection as is exercised at the abattoirs, all danger of the kind is avoided. Under the existing system, the outer integuments and the offal only of the horse are employed in the arts, while millions of men are obliged to abstain from meat and even from bread, feeding on chestnuts or potatoes. Like the ox and the sheep, the horse is essentially herbivorous; no noxious element is elaborated in his economy. His flesh is richly azotised and free from the slightest unwholesomeness. Moreover, it is far from being disagreeable to the taste, as will appear from a few out of numerous testimonials.

The Baron de Tott relates in his Memoirs, that, when entertained in his capacity of Envoy from the King of France, at the table of Krim Gueray, the Khan of the Tartars,

he partook of some excellent smoked ribs of horse, whose fine flavour excited his long and loud eulogy. A justly-esteemed author, Parent Duchâtelet, asserts that, formerly, large quantities of horseflesh were brought into Paris, under one pretext or another, for the purpose of being sold as meat. M. Huzard, Senior, an able veterinarian of the end of the eighteenth century, assures us that, during the famine which raged at the same time as the Revolution, the greater part of the meat consumed in Paris was supplied, for six months, by slaughtered horses, without the public health being in the least inconvenienced by the change. In the campaigns of the Rhine, Catalonia, and the Maritime Alps, the celebrated army-surgeon, Baron Larrey, often had recourse to horseflesh as a means of strengthening his wounded soldiers; and it helped him to save the greater part of his patients. "Experience," says the illustrious military doctor, "demonstrates that the use of horseflesh is a very suitable mode of feeding men. In my own opinion, it is exceedingly nourishing, and its flavour is equally agreeable. I have often employed it, with the greatest success, for the sick and wounded in our army. During the siege of Alexandria, in Egypt, I derived great benefit from it. To obviate the objections made to it by many personages of high military standing, I myself was the first to slaughter my horses, and to eat their flesh. At the battle of Eylau, during the first four-and-twenty hours, I was obliged to sustain my wounded with horseflesh." In eighteen hundred and eleven, at the request of the Paris police, Cadet, Parmentier, and Pariset certified that "horseflesh is very well flavoured; that it is nutritious, like the flesh of other animals; that the labourers at Montfaucon, who consume it, enjoy good health." These savans demanded, in the name of the Council of Salubrity, "that the sale of horseflesh should be tolerated, and that an abattoir should be specially devoted to slaughtering, quartering, and cutting it into joints."

The sole cause of the repugnance which now prevents us from admitting chevaline dishes into our bills of fare, is simply that the various nations of Europe have ceased to eat them for a long time past. A decided aversion has succeeded to the predilection which the ancient populations—the Germans especially—entertained for this description of diet. The Scandinavians and Germans, worshippers of Odin, reared and kept with the utmost care, in sacred pastures, a race of white horses, destined to be immolated to the gods they adored. The sacrifice ended, they boiled the flesh of the animals, and feasted on it. Such is the probable origin of the hippophagy which prevailed amongst the nations of the North, and which became an integral part of the popular habits, until Christianity, penetrating into northern Europe, succeeded in putting down a custom

which was intimately mixed up with pagan rites. Hippophagy, thus blended with the practice of Odinism, was an obstacle to the establishment of Christianity amongst the northern nations. In fact, every time that a Scandinavian, even after his conversion, tasted a morsel of horse, he indulged in the reminiscences of his former belief. Consequently, at an early date, the popes prohibited the use of that meat; religious policy having almost compelled them to it. In a letter written in the eighth century, by Gregory the Third to Saint Boniface, Archbishop of Mayence, we find, "You have informed me that some persons eat wild horse, and the majority domestic horses. Do not allow it to occur for the future. Abolish the custom by every means in your power, and impose a heavy penance on all horse-eaters. They are unclean, and their acts are execrable." Pope Zachariah, the successor of Gregory the Third, renewed the prohibition. Nevertheless, in spite of papal interdictions, it is believed that the use of horseflesh was prevalent in Scandinavia for many years afterwards. The opinion is confirmed by the circumstance that the race of white horses, which furnished the victims for the sacrifices, has never become completely extinct. A tour in Flanders will afford abundant proof to the contrary; though the Frederiksberg stud, belonging to the crown of Denmark, is the only one on the globe in which it is found pure from the slightest taint.

In these enlightened days it will hardly be urged that a return to horseflesh, on the part of the modern Gauls and Anglo-Saxons, is also a return to the worship of Odin; that Woden's Day and Thor's Day are no longer to remain unmeaning proper names. Perhaps the days are not so enlightened; and a smothered rumour may be whispered about, that true religion is in danger, from the threatened blow of a horse's hoof, as foretold in no one quite knows which prophecy. It is a fact that the nomade population of northern Asia have retained, even to the present time, a marked predilection for the flesh of the horse; it constitutes their favourite dish, although possessed of numerous flocks and herds. The more barbarous the tribe, the more decided is their taste for horseflesh; and the Russian missionaries, aping the popes of the eighth century, still find the extirpation of hippophagy a powerful means of proselytism. In our own time, the alimentary employment of horseflesh has regained a certain degree of favour amongst certain populations. Of the civilised nations of Europe, the descendants of the ancient Scandinavians, the Danes, have been the first to give the signal of a return to the usage of antiquity. During the siege of Copenhagen, in eighteen hundred and seven, the Danish government authorised the sale of horse in the butcheries; and, since that epoch, the animal has continued to supply the abattoirs.

There even exists, in the capital of Denmark, a privileged butchery, placed under the surveillance of the veterinary school, where horse-flesh only is sold, at the average price of twelve centimes, or not five farthings a-pound. Thus, the use of horse-flesh is gradually recovering from its long interregnum of disuse; and it is remarkable that it should have been first re-commenced by the very people who were the last to abandon it. Besides Denmark (where, as we have said, this nutritious substance is sold with the approbation of the government), Belgium may be quoted as having, for several years past, partially followed the novel example. The Austrian government has also recently authorised the public sale of the same alimentary material. In Sweden, according to M. Sacc, the use of horse-flesh is rather common than not. The wealthy classes even eat a morsel of salted horse with a glass of wine before dinner, to excite their appetite.

All that is now wanted to inaugurate the movement is a grand banquet of equestrian viands; but the fact is, that the ice is already broken, as recorded in the following episode:—

"Do you like horse?"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean, do you like the meat of the horse?"

"I certainly have never eaten any."

"Will you taste it?"

"Is it good?"

"Excellent. Be persuaded to try it."

"Where, and when, can I eat a sample of horse-meat?"

"At my house, on Saturday evening, at six o'clock. Horse-soup, boiled-horse, and roast-horse. Will that suit you?"

"I accept the invitation."

Such was the little colloquy which took place on Tuesday, at the close of the sitting of the Academy of Medicine, between M. Renault, the able and learned Director of the Imperial Veterinary School of Alfort and myself, Amédée Latour. (These names are not fictitious.)

I confess that, between Tuesday and Saturday, I was obliged to screw up my courage a little. Why indeed, said I to myself, should we not eat horse? In what respect can the flesh of that handsome animal be more repulsive than beef or mutton, or meats supplied by unclean creatures, such as pigs and ducks? How many occasions are there when horse-flesh might enter, as an accident or a supplement, into the national diet! A serious economical question, perhaps, lies hid beneath this fact. Let us help to solve it in our humble sphere. The high price of butchers' meat is a real public calamity. If it were possible to introduce horse-flesh into general consumption, meat, which is the veritably nutritious article of food, would be more obtainable by the masses. By such wise considerations as these, I tried hard to over-

come the little bit of repugnance which I still felt—the instinctive dislike which man entertains for all unaccustomed articles of food. I confess, besides, that I took the precaution to breakfast sparingly, that the sharp edge of hunger might make me less fastidious; and, in fact, I arrived at Alfort in a very satisfactory disposition of appetite.

The moment of the bold experiment arrived. A word at starting about the experimenters: There were, M. Renault, the amphitryon, who was no novice in the matter, and who professes a great respect for horseflesh; that very morning he had breakfasted off the *sauté* liver of the animal, and declared that it proved deliciously good. M. Renault made the experiment with the certainty of success. M. the Professor H. Bouley, the lively and clever opponent of M. Malgaigne touching the effects of setons. This experimenter did not appear so warm as his colleague in the praise of horse; he confessed to some obsolete remains of repulsion; he was no novice either, and he did not seem to retain a very engaging souvenir of his former experience. M. Keynal, chef de clinique, author of a very interesting work on the poisonous properties of brine pickle, who openly participated in M. Renault's prepossession in favour of horseflesh. M. Robinet, of the Academy of Medicine, the terrible but amiable exterminator of new and secret specific remedies. M. Foubert, the head of the Bureau des Substances at the government office of agriculture and commerce, a person seriously interested in the question. M. Prevost, the head of the Bureau of Agriculture, in the same office; M. Barral, Professor of Chemistry, the faithful editor of Arago's works, together with one of his friends, whose name I have stupidly forgotten. A lady,—yes, delicate young gentlemen,—an amiable and charming lady, who set us all an example of resolution and courage. Finally, the reporter of the proceedings.

Another word on the subject of the experiment. It was an old horse, who, after three-and-twenty years of good and loyal service, had the misfortune to be attacked by paralysis of the hind quarters. He was fat, and, you may be sure, exempt from the slightest suspicion of disease. He was slaughtered on the Wednesday previous. The experiment was, therefore, not made under the most favourable circumstances; and M. Renault observed with reason, that the flesh of a young horse would assuredly give more satisfactory results.

The experiment began; M. Renault had made admirable arrangements. Beside the subject of experiment was placed the point of comparison: horse soup—beef soup; boiled horse meat—boiled beef; the same quantity, the same category—judge and compare. Nothing can be better planned.

Bouillon of Horse.—General surprise! It is perfect, excellent, well-fed, full of body,

aromatic, rich in flavour ; it is the classic and honoured consommé, the tradition of which is unhappily daily fading away in Parisian households, and which has become a myth even in the best public places of entertainment.

Bouillon of Beef.—Good, but comparatively inferior, less decided in flavour, less perfumed, less saturated with savouriness.

The jury unanimously decided that horse, even old horse, makes a soup of superior quality ; that it is impossible to distinguish its flavour from that of the richest consommé of beef, and that persons who had not been previously informed would be unable to distinguish the difference. There was the same colour, the same limpidity.

Boiled Horse.—The meat is of a darker brown than beef ; it is also dryer, and offers greater resistance to the teeth ; in other respects, no particular taste ; it has the flavour of boiled beef, but not of the very first description ; I have eaten better beef, but I have also eaten very much worse. To sum up, it is very eatable ; poor people, who buy the most inferior old cow, would find a sensible difference for the better, were they admitted to partake of this boiled horse. Moreover, it must not be forgotten that we have to do with an aged animal, and that probably a young one would have given a superior boiled joint.

Boiled Beef.—A magnificent cut from a first-rate bullock. Evidently it is better than the other, more juicy and tender.

The jury's verdict was, that the boiled meat of this old horse was good, free from any particular smell or taint ; that it resembled second and third-class beef so closely as to be mistaken for them, and that it might be made to constitute a wholesome and pleasant article of food. An interlude, consisting of an excellent fricandeau à la chicorée, and a delicate fowl with white sauce, enabled the experimenters to await patiently the roast joint of horse ; the fillet of the animal, which had been slightly mariné and richly larded.

An explosion of satisfaction ! Nothing can be finer, more delicate, or tender. Fillet of roe-deer—of whose aroma it reminds you—is not superior. A member of the jury begs to carry home a slice. Many repeat the experiment. Gourmands are not aware of the excellence of this joint—I recommend it to their attention. It is perfect in every respect. Ye little susceptibilities of my stomach, how very ridiculous you were ! Unanimously and enthusiastically, the jury proclaimed that the fillet of the old horse ought to take rank with the most recherchés and luxurious meats. M. H. Bouley was conquered and converted, and boldly avowed the fact.

August truth compels me to state that some excellent roast partridges, which followed the horse, were not absolutely disdained by the jury, any more than the delicate entremets which succeeded them, or than the

insinuating temptations and fruits of the dessert ; which proves evidently that horse-flesh does not stick by the way during its passage through the intricate and narrow defiles of the digestive channel—and that is an element of some importance in the question. For my part, remembering a true and clever aphorism uttered by a man who is well informed in the hygiène of the stomach—our fellow-labourer, M. L. Véron—I waited four-and-twenty hours before writing these lines, in order to be able to declare that I am inditing them without the slightest digestive remorse.

WOMEN AT ALDERSHOT.

For rather more than a month past, circumstances have made me a resident in the immediate neighbourhood of the camp at Aldershot, and the same circumstances have allowed me to be a daily witness, not alone of its outward aspect, but of its internal economy.

The feature which appears to me at once the most startling and the most interesting, is the condition of the female population : I mean of such women as have been allowed by the rules of the service to accompany their husbands to this training school of war.

In all regiments composing the British army, a certain per-centage of women is allowed ; that is, a certain number of men may marry, with the permission of their commanding officers, and the women so married are allowed certain privileges—such as remuneration as washerwomen for their husbands' comrades, permitted occupation of barracks, and so on ; while the wives of such men as marry without leave, as the term is, are beyond the pale of all indulgence, and must be supported as they best can on the thirteen-pence a-day, which includes the whole of their husbands' pay. This pay, moreover, by reason of unavoidable expenses, being very commonly reduced to a groat per diem.

When the time for foreign service arrives, the existence of women who are married to soldiers without leave is, by commanding officers, altogether ignored, and a very small portion of the recognised women, or those married with leave, are allowed to accompany their respective regiments. What the condition of these women will be, depends a good deal on the station to which the regiments may be ordered, and to the individual characters of the officers commanding. In times of peace, in the Mediterranean stations their position is better than in England ; but in time of war, as of late in the Crimea, the misery of these unhappy creatures defies all description.

At Aldershot two women in each company have been allowed to follow their husbands ; but, as the sergeants' wives had the advantage

of preference, there is seldom found more than one private's wife in a company.

The rest of the women, those married with and those married without leave, remain usually in the town from which their regiments have marched; they are shunned as soldiers' wives, and, being unable to gain honest employment, the whole honest support remaining for them is the three-pence a-day lately allowed by government for those married with leave, and three half-pence for each child, with such addition as the husband may spare from his surplus fourpence a-day—not in general a very liberal one, as we may readily suppose, considering the temptations of a camp life, and its canteens. When apart from her husband's regiment, however, the soldier's wife has one advantage. She may, as a young and modest woman, support her self-respect, though steeped to the lips in poverty; she may close the door of her poor room against the voices of blasphemy and riot, and before she lies down, with her little children around her, on the bare floor that is all the rest her poverty allows, she can yet teach them to fold their little hands in prayer.

Not so in the Camp at Aldershot. Here, all the miseries, all the demoralising influences exist, common to barrack life in England; influences so terrible, that were it not for the chapel which crowns the height, we might well be forgiven for doubting if we stood on Christian ground.

To describe the Camp at Aldershot is unnecessary: its position on the dark heath, its long lettered avenues flanked by black wooden huts, its lines of fluttering linen, its schools, parade grounds, and canteens, have become familiar to most of us; but that to which we now desire to draw the attention of at least every wife and mother in England, is the condition of demoralising misery to which this camp and its arrangements exposes their sister woman.

We are beginning to discover, that men and women are pretty much what society makes them; and, in this view, we will see what is now doing for our race at Aldershot.

In all the lines in camp there are what are called Married Huts, with high windows, a door at either end, and a cooking stove in the centre. Along the sides of these huts, are ranged iron bedsteads in pairs; and, in cases where not more than five married people with their children occupy the same hut (this, be it observed, being the minimum of occupation), small divisions between the beds are partially screened off by regimental blankets, a scanty sheet or two, or a woman's dress. Under circumstances, however, where families are more crowded—in which case, ten men, ten women, and eight children, are to be found occupying one hut—these attempted preservations of decency are impossible. The double beds nearly touch each other, and are without

even the scantiest attempt at screen or curtain.

The camp has no accommodation for sick women or children—their hospitals having no ward set apart for them, as in Indian military arrangements; and as lodgings are unprocurable in the surrounding villages, the women, if unable to travel to their homes, are compelled to remain in the public and crowded hut, depending on such expensive aid as the camp may afford.

The wife of a non-commissioned officer, who, with her young family, accompanied her husband with his regiment from the coast a short time since, and who is now daily expecting her confinement, occupies a hut, in which twenty single men live, and the space between the beds scarcely allows standing room, far less any provision for privacy. In another case, not a week since, I visited a young delicate-looking creature, who had lately given birth to a dead infant, here, in the room in which I saw her; a room occupied by ten beds, all curtainless except her own, which stood in a corner, and which was partially concealed with blankets, fastened to strings as they best could be with clothes-pegs. The woman in her weakness sat cowering over the centre stove, while, above and around, wet clothes, the soldiers' washing, dripped upon the floor; from among the dirty coverings of nearly every bed, were raised the unwashed faces of crying children, and on benches around, men lounged, and cursed, and quarrelled, waiting for their mid-day meal.

The occupants of this hut belonged to the militia, and the matter was hard and strange enough to them. Unhappily, the women of the line are too well trained in the demoralising influences of our barrack system to feel the evil, or to deplore it,—but these women, many of them drawn from the ranks of our peasantry, poor though they may have been, were yet accustomed at least to the decencies and protections of their cottage homes, and they speak of their position with dismay. As I have listened to their complaints, a certain satisfaction has mingled with shame and sorrow when I have found their nature to be not yet wholly brutalised by the system pursued towards them. Perhaps the reason for this may be, that it is equally new to all, and that in some degree they aid each other to lessen the greatest horrors of the position. It is otherwise in the line. There corruption lies in wait for the new-comer. The perhaps innocent girl, whose character has so borne inspection, that the necessary permission is yielded to a marriage, which allows her the privilege of barrack accommodation, no sooner shrinks aghast from the mingled occupation of the room shared by her husband, from the oaths, the foul language, and the scenes of pollution around, than some woman, once perhaps as innocent as herself, laughs at her scruples, scoffs at her

modesty, and at first suggests the remedy. A few weeks, and the character of the woman hardens; the ardent spirits which stopped the tears of shame, and dulled the sounds of obscenity and blasphemy as they fell upon her ear, have become necessary to her daily life; and now, the means must be obtained wherewith to gain the stimulus,—and so, from step to step she falls, and we have not long to wait before, in the drunken, dissolute, fear-inspiring, and slatternly brawler of our barrack yard, the result of our training system becomes too evident. Then, seeing the soldier's wife what we have made her—our morality shudders at the sight, we gather our garments closer round us, and so pass by on the other side.

Now, what our barrack system has already made of the women of the line, our camp at Aldershot will speedily make of the women of the militia. The curse already begins to work. Men wearied, as they told me, with parades and drill, are prevented from necessary rest, by the cries of a sick or peevish child. The irritated soldier vents his disgust in oaths. Quarrels ensue. The father, goaded by the language of his comrade, abuses his wife for lack of better management, and perhaps curses the innocent child who has been the cause of the disturbance. The annoyance spreads, recrimination follows recrimination, abuse thickens on abuse; and, when the morning dawns, and the gun fires, the men go forth to duty, weary and excited; the little children are driven forth to learn such evil as they may; and their dirty, weary, heartsick mothers drudge through the day in misery and hopeless toil.

In each camp at Aldershot there is a chapel. It is well done. It is right that the British soldier should be taught that he should serve his God, that he may the better serve his country. In every line at Aldershot there are schools; this also is well done; for, on the little children assembling there, England may depend hereafter for the protection of her liberties, her very faith, her laws, her peace. But of what avail can either church or school be, if in every hut a moral canker grows and spreads; if, back to the cottage homes of England a stream of moral pollution is allowed to flow; if woman's virtue and childhood's innocence are to be alike practically set at nought by a system that would be humiliating to a savage nation; if expediency, pointing at the evil of marriage in the army, is, to endeavour to lessen that evil by a plan of systematic training in depravity?

The evils of our barrack system have been, in a great measure, unknown to the British people. They have learnt from many sources to mistrust and dread, and to deny honest employment to the wife of a soldier; but, few among us have been induced to ask, what are the influences which seem to have exercised so powerful an evil on so large a portion of our social community?

Few persons visit barracks, and thus their internal economy is seldom known, except to those intimately connected with their arrangements. The camp at Aldershot, however, is the great military attraction of the day. Let the wives and mothers of every rank of life, who make a holiday, to visit the camp, enter the married huts there; let them seek out those in particular, now the most crowded, in the levies of the Irish regiments; let them take those huts as a sample of the universal barrack-system of Great Britain, and then judge for themselves. If no other good arises, mercy will at least be learnt. We shall have seen the system which has made the soldier's wife what she is, and the uplifted stone will drop from the hand of pity, as we shall at last commiserate rather than blame; we shall know how to sorrow over the origin of the evil rather than shrink from its effect, and we shall see that, in common with many other items in our social system, the soldier's wife is the victim of an unwise and most unmerciful training, over which she, as an individual, has had no control.

SOME GERMAN SUNDAYS.

Of how Sunday is really spent by the labouring classes in some towns in Germany, I claim, as an English workman who has worked and played on German ground, some right to speak. It is possible that I may relate matters which some do not suspect, and concerning which others have already made up their minds; but, as I shall tell nothing but truths, I trust I may not very much disconcert the former, nor put the latter completely out of patience, nor offend anybody.

To begin with Hamburgh. I spent seven months in this free, commercial port, earning six and seven shillings a-week as a journeyman jeweller; receiving, as is the custom, my daily food at my employer's hands; and nestling nightly between two feather beds in a narrow closet adjoining his bedroom. I came into Hamburgh on a Sunday morning; and, although everything was new and strange to me, and a number of things passed before my eyes which could never be seen in decorous London, yet there were unmistakeable signs of Sunday in them all—only it was not the Sunday to which I had been born and bred. The shops were closed, and there was stillness in the houses, if not in the streets. I passed by the forecourted entrance to a theatre, and its doors were shut; but one could easily guess by the bills at the door-posts that it offered histrionic entertainment for the evening. Wandering through some beautifully wooded walks which encircle the city, I met many promenaders, trim, well-dressed, and chatty; and when I turned back into the city, was once or twice

absorbed in the streams of people which flowed from the church doors. One thing was certain; the people were not at work. It struck me at once; for I met them at every turn in their clean faces and spruce clothes—the veritable mechanic may be known in every country—and there was the happy look and the lounging gait in all, which told that they had laid down their implements of trade for that day and were thoroughly at leisure. When I came to be domiciled and fairly at work, I learned to discriminate more clearly between many apparently irreconcilable things; and will here roughly set down what we did, or did not, on Sundays, in the emporium and outlet of Northern Germany; which, it will be well to remember, is thoroughly Lutheran-Protestant in its faith.

There was a church not far from our workshop—I think the Jacobi-kirke—which had the sweetest set of Dutch bells that ever rung to measure, and these played at six o'clock in the morning on every day in the week; but, to our minds, they never played so beautiful a melody as when they woke us on the Sunday morning, to the delightful consciousness of being able to listen to them awhile, through the drowsy medium of our upper feather bed. Once fairly roused, properly attired, and breakfasted with the Herr, what did we next? Sometimes we worked till midday, but that was a rarity; for our ordinary day's labour was thirteen hours, with scarcely a blink of rest at meal-times, and often we had not stirred from the house during the whole week, but had worn out the monotonous hours between bed and workboard. When, however, orders pressed, we did work; but this again was no new thing to me, for I had done the same thing in London; had toiled deep into the Saturday night, and had been up again to work on the Sunday morning, because some gentleman or lady who was engaged, I dare say, in their morning devotions, could not bide the ordinary time for their trinkets. If we did work, which as I have said was a rarity, our ordinary pay of two shillings, scarcely twopence per hour, was increased to three.

Sometimes we went to church; and we always found a goodly congregation there. The service was in good honest German; and the preacher—quaintly conspicuous to an English eye by his velvet skull-cap, and a wonderfully plaited frill which bristled round his neck—was always earnest and impressive, and often eloquent. Among other religious services, I well remember that of the *Bres und Bet Tag*, (Day of Repentance and Prayer,) the anniversary of the battle of Leipsic; and a remarkable sermon preached on St. Michael's Day, and of which I bought a copy after the service of a poor widow who stood at the church door. If the weather were fine, we strolled along the banks of the beautiful Alster, or made

short excursions into the country; and here again all was repose, for I recollect having once had pointed out to me as a matter of wonder a woman who was toiling in the field. Or, if the weather were stormy and wet, we stayed in the workshop and read, or made drawings, or worked in the manufacture of some favourite tool. Often, again, we had especial duties to perform on that day, in the shape of visiting some sick craftsman in the hospital, to pay him his weekly allowance, or convey him a book, or some little creature comforts. The Sunday morning was an authorised visiting time, and the hospital was usually crowded—too crowded with patients, as we thought—and each had his cluster of cheering friends. Or we paid friendly visits to fellow workmen, smoked quiet pipes, and told travellers' stories, or listened to the uncertain essays of our brethren of the *Männergesangverein* as they practised their part music. There was one piece of business transacted on the Sunday morning which may have been sinful, although we did not view it in that light. We paid our tailors' bills on the Sunday morning if we had the money, or ordered new garments if we had credit; and I believe it is a practice more generally prevalent even in England than gentlefolks are apt to imagine.

We dined with the Herr at noon, and at one o'clock were at liberty for the day. I have seen a Danish harvest-home on a Sunday afternoon in the pretty village of Altona; watching its merry murmurs as they passed by the old church-yard wall, where Klopstock lies buried. I have attended a funeral as a real mourner, followed by the mourning professionals in the theatrical trappings with which the custom of Hamburg usually adorns them. If we bent our steps, as we sometimes did, through the Altona gate to Hamburger Berg, we came upon a scene of hubbub and animation which was something between Clare Market on Saturday night, and High Street, Greenwich, at fair time. Stalls, booths, and baskets lined the way; flowers, fruit, and pastry disputed possession of the side-paths with sugar-plums, sticks and tobacco-pipes; and, although Franconi's Circus was not open yet, it gave every promise of being so; and the air already rang with voices of showmen, and the clangour of instruments. In the summer there were gay boats on the Alster, and nautical holiday-makers were busy with oar and sail; while, in the winter months, if the ice held well, there was no end of skating and sledging; and then we had a pleasant winter-garden near the Tivoli, with orange-trees in tubs, the mould so covered over as to form extemporary tables, and the green leaves and pale fruit shining above our heads. At the upper end was a conservatory of choice plants, which was more particularly appropriated to the ladies and children. The café pavilions on the Alster steamed odorifer-

rously; punch and hot coffee were in the ascendant; and there were more cigars smoked in an afternoon on the Jungfern Stieg (the Maiden's Walk) than would have stored the cases of a London suburban tobacconist.

These may, perhaps, be reckoned mere idlings, but there were occasionally official doings on the Sunday, which might have been national, if Hamburg had been a nation, but which no doubt were eminently popular. Two such, I remember; one a grand review of the Bürger Militär; the other the public confirmation of the apprentices and others, and the conscription of the youth of the city. The former was a trying affair. Some twelve thousand citizen-soldiers had to turn out, fully rigged and equipped, by early dawn, ready for any amount of drill and evolution. Many were the stories—more witty than generous—of the whereabouts of their uniforms and accoutrements; as to their being deposited in Lombardian hands, as wholly used up since the last grand field-day some three years before. Such furbishing as there was of brass ornaments and metal-buttons; such an oiling and sand-papering of brown muskets, and such a rearrangement of blue tunics which, after all, did not match in colour, length, nor appointments! Fortunately our warriors did not burn powder; and there was enough of military ardour among them to carry them through the fatigue of the day. It required a great deal; for, like other military bodies of a late day, the commissariat department totally broke down, and citizens were kept hungering and thirsting upon the blank, dusty plain within half-a-mile of stored-up abundance. The confirmation of the apprentices and the conscription of the young men was a more serious matter. It took place in the great square, where a stage and pavilion were erected; all the authority of the senate, and the services of the church were united to render it solemn and impressive. It was a source of deep interest to many of my own acquaintances, more especially to the young cooper who worked underground at our house, and who, just released from his apprenticeship, had the good or ill fortune to be drawn for the next year's levy.

There was one institution, not precisely of Hamburg, but at the very doors of it, which exercised considerable influence upon its habits and morals, and that of no beneficial kind. This was the Danish State Lottery, the office of which was at Altona, where the prizes were periodically drawn upon Sunday. The Hamburgers were supposed to receive certain pecuniary advantages from this lottery, in the shape of benefits bestowed upon the Waisenkinder of the town, who, like our own blue-coat boys of the old time, were the drawers of the numbers; but the advantages were very questionable, seeing that the bulk of spectators were the Ham-

burghers themselves, and the great prizes of the undertaking went to swell the Danish Royal Treasury. Portions of shares could be purchased for as low a sum as fourpence, and the Hamburg senate, in self defence, and with a great show of propriety, prohibited the traffic of them among servants and apprentices: which prohibition passed, of course, for next to nothing, seeing that the temptation was very strong, and the injunction very weak. It was a curious sight to witness the crowd upon the occasion of a public drawing in the quaint old square of Altona; a pebble dotted space with a dark box in the centre, not unlike the basement of a gallows. On this stood the wheel, bright in colours and gold, and by its side two orphan boys in school-costume, who officiated at the ceremony. One boy turned the wheel, the other drew the numbers, and called them aloud as he held them before the spectators; while the blast of a trumpet heralded the announcement. What feverish anxiety, what restless cupidity might be fostering among that crowd no man could calculate, and certainly, to my mind, there was no worse thing done on the Sunday in all Hamburg than this exhibition of legalised gambling.

Of course the theatres were open, and we of the working people were not unfrequent visitors there. But let us thoroughly understand the nature of a German theatrical entertainment. There is rarely more than one piece, and the whole performance is usually included in the period of two hours—from seven till nine. The parterre, or pit, is a mere promenade, or standing-place, in which the few seats are let at a higher price than the rest of the space. The whole of the arrangements are conducted with the utmost decorum: so much so, that they would probably disappoint some people who look upon the shouting, drovers' whistling, and hoaroor and hissing of some of our theatres, as part of the legitimate drama. On the Christmas day, when I had the option of getting gloriously fuddled with a select party of English friends, or of entertaining myself in some less orthodox way, I preferred to witness the opera of Norma at the Stadt Theatre, and think I was the better for the choice. Hamlet was the source of another Sunday evening's gratification (an anniversary play of the Hamburgers, and intensely popular with the Danes), although with unpardonable barbarity the German censors entirely blotted out the gravediggers, and never buried the hapless "sweet Ophelia." In the gallery of the Imperial Opera-house at Vienna, liveried servants hand sweetmeats, ices, and coffee about between the acts; and although the Hamburger theatricals have not yet reached this stage of refinement, there is much in the shape of social convenience in their arrangement which even we might copy.

Sometimes we, workmen, spent a pleasant hour or two in the concert-rooms, of which there were several admirably conducted; or pored hours long over the papers, chiefly literary, in the Alster Halle; sipping our coffee, and listening in the pauses of our reading to the band of choice musicians, who played occasionally through the evening. Sometimes we dived into snug cellars, where they sold good beer, or mixed odorous punch; and here again music would come, though in a more questionable shape, her attendant priestesses being the wandering harp-players, who sang sentimental ditties to the twanging of their instruments. Other places there were, some in the city, and some outside the walls, where an abominable medley of waltz, smoke, wine, and lotto made up the evening's entertainment. The larger of these establishments had some pretensions to gentility, seeing that they did not allow gentlemen to dance with their hats on; but whatever other claims they set up to the respect of the community may be briefly set down as worth very little. It will not unnaturally follow that where there is much liberty there will be some licence, and with respect to Hamburg, it is in her dance-houses that this excess is to be found. But where is the wonder? The Hamburger authorities, in this and some other cases, set up a sort of excise officer, and grant permits for this frivolity, and that vice, at a regular scale of charges.

In spite of these half-incentives and whole encouragements to laxity of behaviour, what is the general character of the Hamburger population? I venture to call them provident, temperate, and industrious. Let it be remembered that we speak of a mercantile port, in some parts a little like Wapping, and into and out of which there is a perpetual ebb and flow of seamen of all nations, full of boisterous humour, of strong life, and wilful in their recent escape from ship restraint. The worst of the dance-houses are situated near the water's edge, and are almost wholly frequented by sailors; while the other resorts which are open to the charge of licentiousness, have also a strong proportion of maritime frequenters, and the rest is mostly made up of the wandering workmen of Germany, to many of whom Hamburg is a culminating point, and who are, as it were, out on leave. But, after all, these cancer spots are few indeed, when compared with the great proportion of the means of amusement thrown open, or, rather never closed to the people. Wander on the Sunday when and where you will; in theatre, concert-room, or coffee-house; in public garden or beer-cellar; you will find them joyous indeed, sometimes loud in song or conversation, and taking generally a sort of pride in a dash of rudeness, calling it independence, but you will never find them sottish; nowhere cumbering the footway with their prostrate carcasses; no-

where reeling zigzag, blear-eyed and stupid, to a miserable home.

On tramp towards the South, we rested on the Sunday in Schwerin, the capital of Mecklenburgh; but there was public mourning in the city for a death in the ducal family, and the usual Sunday festivities were forbidden. On attending church in the evening, I found a large congregation, and the service similar to that of Hamburg. In the afternoon, as there was no military parade or music, over the absence of which the chambermaids of Der Gross-Herzog moaned dolorously, we rambled through the ducal garden, admiring the quaintly-shaped basin in its centre, its numerous statues, and fresh grass. The town was dull and methodical enough, but would have been rejoicing, if it had not been respectably mournful.

Our next resting-place was Berlin, where we stayed two months; and here, according to our experience, the Sunday afternoon recreations differed only in tone from those of Hamburg, being less boisterous in their gaiety than in the former seaman's paradise. We never worked on Sunday in Berlin, nor did any of our artisan friends, although there were very pressing orders in the shape of those unvarying German court conceurs, diamond-circled snuffboxes, and insignia of the Red and Black Eagle. Once, we accompanied our principal, by special invitation, to the Hasenheide, to witness the rifle practice, civil and military, among its heather and sandy hollows. Officers and rank and file alike were there; the officer practising with the private's heavy gewehr, and the private in his turn with the light weapon of his superior in grade. There were some capital shots among them. Thence, on the same day, we waded through the sand to Tegel, to visit the residence and private grounds of Baron Humboldt; and from a mound in his garden beheld the beautifully picturesque view of Lake Tegel, and the distant towers of Spandau. I have been present on the Sunday at a review of the Royal Garde in their striking uniform of black and dazzling white.

Once, we made a river voyage in a huge tub of a boat along the weedy banks of the Spree, under the command of a female captain—a jolly matron, weighing I am afraid to guess how many stone. I am told it was a very plebeian piece of business, but we were very happy notwithstanding. We had a Tafellieder party on board, with a due proportion of guitars, and they played and sang all the way to Treptow and back again. Once arrived at our destination, we sat upon the grass, and watched the merry groups around, or sauntered along the margin of the stream, sipping occasionally very inconsiderable quantities of feeble cordials; and when the evening drew near, we re-embarked, and, under the safe conduct of our female commodore—who was skilled in the difficult navi-

gation of the shallow river—returned soberly home. The environs of Berlin are of no great beauty, the city being built on a sandy plain, with the single eminence of the Kreutzberg, from which it can be viewed with advantage; but in and about the city there are beautiful gardens, private and of royal foundation, and these are invariably open to the public. One happy Sunday afternoon we spent in Charlottenburg, the pleasure palace of the king; and one other in the noble botanical gardens in the city; while on a fine day the avenue of lime-trees, Unter-den-Linden, in its crowd of promenaders, and social groups at the refreshment-tables, presented an animated, and, to my mind, a recreative and humanising spectacle. Music was everywhere; and in the theatres, in the display of pyrotechnic eccentricities, or perhaps in ballooning—but that was English—the evening was variously spent. There may be dance-houses and other abominations in Berlin, as in Hamburg, but I never heard of them, and if they existed, more was the pity. For my own part, I was happy in enjoying the moderate pleasures of life in company with the majority of my fellow-workmen, who, I must again say, and insist upon, were not at work, but at rest, on the Sunday. It is true that here, as elsewhere, tailors and bootmakers (master men) were content to take measures, and receive orders from the workmen, for very little other opportunity presented itself for such necessary service.

A few hours' whirl on the railway on a Sunday saw us in Leipsic. This was at the Easter festival; and we stayed two months in this Saxon market of the world, embracing in their course the most important of the three great markets in the year. If ever there was a fair opportunity of judging the question of Sunday labour and Sunday rest, it was in Leipsic, at this period. If Sunday work be a necessary consequence of Sunday recreation—an absurd paradox, surely—it would have been exhibited in a commercial town, at a period when all the elements of frivolity, as gathered together at a fair, and all the wants of commerce compressed into a few brief weeks, were brought into co-existence. Yet in no town in Germany did I witness so complete a cessation from labour on the Sunday. There was no question of working. Early in the morning there was, it is true, a domestic market in the great square, highly interesting to a stranger from the number of curious costumes collected together; the ringletted Polish Jew, old Germans from Altenburg, seeming masqueraders from the mining districts of the Erzgebirge, and country folks from every neighbouring village, who flocked to Leipsic with their wares and edibles. But all this was at an end long before the church service commenced. I have been in the Nicolai-Kirche (remarkable for its lofty roof, upheld by columns in the form of palm trees), and the congregation throughout the

whole edifice. And at a smaller church, I was completely wedged in by the standing crowd of unmistakable working people, whose congregational singing was particularly effective. The German Protestant church service is not so long as our own. There are only a few pews in the body of the building; and the major part of the audience stand during the service. I was not so well pleased with one sermon I heard in the English church, for it happened to be the effort of a German preacher, a student in our tongue, whose discourse was indeed intrinsically good, and would have been solemn, if the pauses and emphases had only been in the right places.

I never worked on Sunday in Leipsic, nor was I ever acquainted with any one who did. The warehouses were strictly closed; and a few booths, with trifling gewgaws, were alone to be seen. The city was at rest. Leipsic has but one theatre, and to this the prices of admission are doubled in fair-times, which placed it out of our reach. Thus we were forced to be content with humbler sources of amusement, and to find recreation, which we readily did, in the beautiful promenades round the city, laid out by Dr. Müller; in country rambles to Breitenfeld, and other old battle-fields; in tracing the winding paths of a thin wood, near the town, wonderful to us from the flakes of wool (baumwolle) which whitened the ground. Or again, among the bands of music and happy crowds which dotted the Rosenthal—a title, by the bye, more fanciful than just, seeing that the vale in question is only a grassy undulating plain. Here we sometimes met the Herr, with wife on arm, and exchanged due salutations.

The fair, such as we understand by the name, commenced in the afternoon, and was a scene of much noise and some drollery. The whole town teemed with itinerant musicians, whose violent strains would sometimes burst from the very ground under your feet, as it appeared, issuing as they did from the open mouths of beer and wine-cellars. Quiet coffee-houses there were, in which grave citizens smoked and read; and admirable concerts in saloons, and in the open air. To one of these latter I was seduced, by the mendacious announcement of a certain Wagner of Berlin, that a whole troop of real Moors would perform fantastic tricks before high heaven; on paying the price of admission, I had to run the gauntlet through a score of black-headed Fentons, who salaamed and grinned as they ushered me into the blank space beyond, containing nothing more interesting than a few tables and chairs, a dumb brass band, and a swarm of hungry waiters. I saw no dance-houses, such as there were in Hamburg; and by nine o'clock the festivities of the day were at an end. The Easter fair lasted some five or six weeks, and at its termination its merriment dis-

appeared. The wandering minstrels wailed their last notes as they departed, and the quiet city was left to its students and the pigeons.

So much for my experiences of Protestant Germany as regards Sunday occupation. I have, however, said nothing of museums or picture galleries. I should be sorry to misrepresent the kindred commercial cities of Hamburg and Leipsic; but I think they may shake hands on this question, seeing that, at the period of my visit, they possessed neither the one nor the other. I do not say that there were no stored-up curiosities, dignified with the title of museums. But, as far as the public instruction was concerned, they were nearly useless, being little known and less visited, and certainly not accessible on the Sunday. Schwerin, in Mecklenburgh possesses a noble ducal museum of arts and sciences, but this also was closed on the weekly holiday; and in Berlin, where the museum, par excellence, may vie with any in Europe, and which city is otherwise rich in natural and art collections, the doors of all such places were, on the Sunday, strictly closed against the people. Of the good taste which authorises the display of stage scenery and decorations (and that not of the best), and yet forbids the inspection of the masterpieces of painting; of the judgment which patronises beer and tobacco, yet virtually condemns as unholy the sight of the best evidences of nature's grandeur, and the beautiful results of human efforts in art; it is not necessary to treat here.

CHIPS.

SICK RAILWAY CLERKS.

AMONG the hard-working classes in this country there is scarcely any body of men whose duties, in proportion to the recompense they derive from them, are so incessant and responsible as those of railway clerks. These men must have been moderately well educated, and possess an accurate knowledge of accounts. They must be unfailing in official attendance, which in extreme cases extends, with short intervals for meals, from seven in the morning till eleven at night of each working day, with occasional Sunday duty. They must be ready and civil in answering all questions put to them by the public. They must be respectful to their superiors and firm with their inferiors. They must, at country stations, attend to the passenger goods and parcel traffic; and send up to the chief office as many as eight or ten intricate returns every day.

There are in England twelve thousand railway clerks, each of whose average salary amounts to no more than eighty pounds per annum; and on this small income they must dress well and appear like gentle-

men. To do this and to maintain himself, the railway clerk must exercise much self-denial and economy, even if single; but how is it with him if he have a wife and family to support, and what chance has he of laying by anything for sickness or old age?

We understand that, amongst this numerous body there is not on any of the railways in England, any fund or club by which provision can be secured against sickness or disability. Mechanics and labouring men generally provide for themselves some such security against the evil day; but railway clerks have not united to form such a society; which would assure them of help when health or strength deserts them. It is true that their earnings scarcely allow of their allotting more than a trifle for such a purpose; but a trifle from each of the twelve thousand clerks employed throughout England would amount to a considerable fund; and thus, if properly kept up and administered by their own body gratuitously, would be the means of saving an immense amount of misery and degradation amongst a class of men whose services we all value, and whose exertions we all respect.

HORNET ARCHITECTURE.

WE strike off the following Chip from the letter of a correspondent in Adelaide, Australia:—I secured a curiosity yesterday in the shape of a hornet's-nest that has been built in my bedroom. It is built of clay, and was stuck against the wall at the back of the room, and is about the size of a breakfast-cup. A single hornet was the artificer, and he seemed to work at it very hard. He was nearly a couple of inches long, but very slim, the thin centre of his body being nearly a quarter of an inch long, which made him look as if he had met with an accident, and had had the tail-end of his body pulled nearly off. He was a formidable-looking fellow, but did not seem at all inclined to molest us, and we did not meddle with him or his nest till the nest was apparently finished. The nest consists of several cells about an inch long and three-eighths of an inch wide, in which the hornet lays her eggs, and into which she stores spiders and moths to serve as food for the grubs. The cells are completely built up, and the whole was covered over with little excrescences, for the purpose, as I suppose, of deception, that the nest might look like a mere clod of clay.

We have here several varieties of insects similar to wasps and hornets, but they all appear to be solitary in their habits, and do not trouble us either by their stings or by eating our fruit. They are particularly troublesome, however, in consequence of their building their nests in all sorts of places where they are not wanted. They are very partial to key-holes, the little hollow places

behind books on the shelves, folds in curtains, &c.; and a friend one day, on putting on a jacket which had lain on the chair in his room for a day or two, found one of their nests in the sleeve.

TOO LATE!

"O! mother, the wind blows chill o'er the moor,
The sleet drives sharp 'gainst the pane,
The blast, like a guest, at the shaken door,
Comes knocking again and again.

O! mother, there's one on the bleak, bare wold,
So weary, and worn, and thin.
Wand'ring alone in the bitter cold:
O! mother, you'll let her in?
For the winter even is dark and drear,
While our home fire-side is bright;
Its glow shines out on the glassy mere,
Like a star through the stormy night.
O! mother, that woman is wan and faint,
Footsore, and hunger'd, and ill:
Open the door to her piteous plaint,
She may die on the snow-wreathed hill."

"Put up the bolt on the creaking door,
The shutter across the pane,
Your sister darkens my hearth no more;
Nor eats of my bread again."

There presses a face to the streaming glass;
She can see the light in the room;
She can see her mother's tall shadow pass,
To the inner chamber's gloom.
As it dusklily glows on the panell'd wall,
The fire looks kind and clear,
And the peering eye that traces it all,
Grows dim with a burning tear.

The gleam from the midnight mere is gone,
The face from the window-glass,
And a step drags wearily, wearily on,
To the edge of the deep morass.
The clouds that, flitting across the moon,
Make shadowy shapes and strange,
And beckon, and waver, and toss, and croon
Round the dim and darksome Grange.

* * * * *
What misty form on the threshold stands,
Faltering in every gust?
Moaning, and wringing its ghastly hands,
Leaving no track in the dust?
Coming and going with soundless tread,
In the gloom across the marsh,
When the moon is up and the world's a-bed,
And the winds whistle chill and harsh?

In the rusty grate there is not a spark,
The door from its hinge is gone;
The wainscot is mouldy, and damp, and dark,
And shatter'd the threshold stone.
The ivy has crept through the broken glass
And trails on the mossy floor:
Gauntly and ghastly the shadows pass
In and out at the door.

Who calls, who calls through the frosty nights,
As the spring-time comes apace?
Who calls, who calls when the summer lights
On meadow, and wold, and chace?

Who calls, who calls through the autumn drear,
When the dusk-brown leaves grow thin?
Who calls with a voice of grief and fear,
"O mother! pray let me in!"

It comes from the marsh like a wailing breeze,
With a shriek, a sob, a moan;
Then dies away midst the writhing trees,
With a curse in its fainting tone.
"O mother! you'll hear that heart-break cry
When you come to Heaven's gate,
And angel-ears are closed to your sigh—
"Too late, too late, too late!"

NEMESIS.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS. CHAPTER THE FIRST.

My father was a gentleman of high respectability, whose family had been seated for many generations near a town that I will call Battenham in North Devon. Coming early into his patrimony, he nevertheless lived a very retired life for one who had a stake in the county, to the upholding or preservation of which, he was well fitted. His self-seclusion, was not the effect of misanthropy, or a refuge for pride; for, with his equals, he maintained the most friendly relations, and he was deservedly beloved by his poorer neighbours and dependents. But he was a man whose delicacy of health was just so much of a reality, as sufficed to plead apology for declining to enter into society, and as served for an excuse to himself for shutting himself in his library; where, year by year, the habit of study grew stronger upon him, while his plea to the world for keeping out of it, likewise became more valid.

Summoned on urgent business to London, where he tarried, or was detained, several months, the good folks of Battenham and the country around had something to talk about when it was made known to them that Squire Westwood had, on his return, brought home a wife with him. Their surprise, had he witnessed it, and their comments, if he had overheard them, would have recalled his own state of feeling immediately after he had proposed and been accepted.

The truth is, the young lady, recently become his wife, was the daughter of an old friend, after whom, during his stay in London, my father had instituted anxious inquiries, and whom he had at last discovered in one of the suburbs dying of a broken heart, the consequence of a bankruptcy. The poor gentleman, having made his peace with God, had now but one earthly solicitude to disturb his few remaining days—the future of his only child. This was apparent in every look he cast upon her, in the tone of every word he addressed to her. My father, of the mature age of forty-five, would willingly have instituted himself the girl's guardian. It was his first impulse to offer her the protection of his home until some situation, such as a lady might accept, should pre-

sent itself. But a warmer, if not a more tender sentiment than compassion soon made itself known in his breast. If it is not always, that men who live retired are not so sensible of the approaches of age as those who are constantly seeing their own and their friends' children grow up about them, it is at least certain that the hearts of the recluse and the man of the world count after a different chronology. My father offered his hand and was accepted. Mr. Grayson died happy in the conviction that his daughter would henceforth live happily—his misfortunes, perhaps, having taught him (with whatever degree of wisdom), that happiness is only to be found with competence. Possibly his daughter married in the same conviction, founded on a like belief. Her adversity, though of short duration, had sorely tried her. I must add, in justice to her, that she was impressed with a due sense of the noble qualities of the man whose name had been given to her at the altar.

My father was not one of those men whose strength of will is chiefly discernible in the resolute determination with which they carry out the promptings of their own selfishness. He saw at once that the course of life to which he had been so long accustomed must, for the sake of the change he had taken upon himself, undergo a very material alteration. His wife was gentle, and of a yielding and an obliging disposition; but she was young, and fond of those pleasures from the indulgence of which the aged seldom withdraw themselves. She liked society, and could bring her share of innocent vivacity into it. It was well that a predilection so natural and reasonable should be gratified. Accordingly, theirs was a gay life both in town and country for several years, the last two of which I can very well remember. I was eight years of age when my father died.

This was an event for which my mother was quite unprepared; although her husband's health had been ever variable, and his death was not altogether sudden. She could scarcely withstand the first shock of her bereavement. To whom could she now look for counsel in difficulty, or consolation in trouble? She remembered that, during his life, she had known neither; that his tenderness had rendered consolation needless; and that his indulgence would have made his counsel an implied reproach. She was thankful for this last suggestion; it reminded her that she had never given him cause for displeasure.

That was clearly proved by the will which, in terms animated by the most entire confidence and affection, left a considerable portion of the testator's property at his widow's absolute disposal. A solicitor of Battenham, named Meredith, a friend of my late father, was sole executor, and had been appointed my guardian. At this gentleman's instance, I was sent to Exeter a few months after my

father's death, to be educated privately by a clergyman of that city, and my mother departed for the metropolis; where her earlier life had been passed. She went there (so she persuaded herself), to escape from her sorrows: possibly, there was a latent wish to re-enter the world, and once more to partake its pleasures.

I had been about a twelvemonth under the care of Mr. Oatway, my tutor, when he informed me that my return home for the ensuing vacation, to which I had been looking forward with boyish eagerness, was now out of the question; for that my mother had married a second time, and that she and her husband had gone on a continental tour, the duration of which was uncertain. He added that I was to remain with him until he received further instructions respecting me.

Young as I was, and well knowing Mr. Oatway's kindness of heart and his affection for me, I could, nevertheless, detect in his face, whilst he was making this communication to me, a seriousness far more grave than any sympathy which my childish disappointment could have wrought upon it. He disapproved this marriage. I learned afterwards from my guardian, and as soon as that plain-spoken man imagined I could heartily respond to his own feelings on the matter, that it had been universally disapproved.

"Your mother made a sad fool of herself, Arthur," said he, "by exchanging the honoured name of Westwood for that of Garston. She lost caste in the county by it, my boy, and almost character. A woman of seven-and-thirty, to throw herself away upon a young fellow of five-and-twenty, because he happened to be the nephew of a peer, and like Pope's Curio, to have a taste for pictures, statues, and the ruins of the past! It's inexcusable—it's monstrous!"

I was disposed to encourage a like opinion. I well recollect the grief which renewed the anguish I had felt at my father's death, and heightened it by the suspicion that my mother's sorrow had been feigned. This suspicion did her injustice; and I believe that although she had found a congenial spirit in the dilettante Mr. Garston, it was a fear of encountering the friends and neighbours of her late husband, at least as strong as any love of the monuments of art and genius to be seen there, that detained her so many years in Italy.

I was in my eighteenth year, and still an inmate of Mr. Oatway's house at Exeter, when I received a letter from my mother, enclosed in one from my guardian, which informed me that she had at length returned to England, and that she was now with Mr. Garston at Westwood House. She had been long in very bad health, she told me, and had come back to the home she had ever loved so well—most

probably to die. She wished that the two months to elapse before I proceeded to the University, should be spent with her; for that she had many things to say to me in relation to my future plans and prospects. This, like the many other letters I had received from her, from time to time during the seven years of our separation, was worded with affectionate tenderness; but there was a more touching seriousness in it than I had taught myself to expect from her, and an allusion to my father which could not have been written with dry eyes, since it brought tears into mine.

The accompanying letter from Mr. Meredith ran pretty nearly as follows: "And so your mother has come back to us, Arthur; and it is my firm belief (I do not wish to alarm you) that she is not long to remain with us. I have taken the liberty of catechising her as closely as a gruff old fellow who claims the privilege of ancient friendship and executorship, may; and, if I am to give credit to her statement, her money has not ricocheted, as I supposed. The nephew of the peer has not been able to prevail upon her to touch the principal; which is more than I had hoped, seeing that he is one of your virtuosi—a tribe I detest."

Impatient to revisit a home to which I had been so long a stranger, I forthwith began to make the necessary preparations; and, on the following morning, was on my way to Battenham. Arrived at that town, there were but three miles to walk, and my luggage would be sent for.

Having reached the point at which the coach came to its journey's end, I alighted, and entered the Newfound Inn, on the quay, where I directed that some refreshment should be brought me to the bench outside. It was a lovely evening, and the place was worthy of it; a place endeared to me by many recollections of infancy, which are always dear, wherever and whatever be the spot to which they may have been ordained to fasten themselves. On my right, was the old bridge, with its four-and-twenty arches; on my left, was the expanded river, soon to be lost in the Severn sea at its confluence with the Atlantic. Before me, on the other side of the river, rose a gently-rounded hill, over which the topmost rim of the harvest-moon was just lifting itself. I watched its slow ascent, and its effect. Not long before was set, far down in the water, a pillar of softened fire; and some time after, there seemed to issue from a hollow in the bank, first timidly, and then with less restraint, myriads of golden and silver sparkles—active, fermenting, swarming—thronging in a straight line, until at length (so it seemed) their tail was completed; and they laid before my feet their perfected and burnished path. I accepted the omen; and the evil forebodings which had obtruded upon me when I shook hands with Mr. Oatway, nearly dispersed

by my exhilarating ride of nearly fifty miles, vanished before the tranquillising influence of the scene, and gave place to cheerful anticipations.

It was rather late when I reached home; but my coming had not been altogether unexpected, and I was conducted straight to the drawing-room. My mother, although evidently very unwell, arose hastily on my entrance. I could see that she blushed as she did so, and that when I advanced she as suddenly grew pale.

"How like his father!" I heard her say, as she embraced me. She then presented me to her husband, who offered me his hand with a grace I had never seen equalled, and a conversation ensued, of which I have forgotten the substance. I only remember that it was somewhat constrained. I was young, unaccustomed to novel subjects of discourse, such as the current topics of the day, of which I knew nothing; and I was unused to strange faces. My mother's had grown strange to me, and, I thought, the constraint was not of my making alone.

What a change had taken place in the face and figure of the richly but negligently attired lady whom my memory at length reluctantly consented to identify as my mother! I remembered her in my father's lifetime, frank, joyous, unembarrassed; natural in every look, spontaneous in every gesture. I had seen her in the days of her sorrow and bereavement; a holy calm possessed her then. Grief had not smitten her, but had laid his sanctifying hand upon her. Now, traces of beauty remained; but no one, out of those traces, could have imaged the beauty that once was hers. Sickness, probably, had done much to change her; but marks of present care and anxiety were on her face, which, I remember, awoke in me speculation rather than sympathy.

When I could bring my scrutiny to bear unobserved upon Mr. Garston, my surprise was of a different character. I had expected—I know not why—to have seen a resemblance of my father; a tall, commanding presence, and a long, oval visage; such a face as we see in the pictures of Raleigh, from whose family, indeed, on the maternal side, my father claimed descent. But Mr. Garston was diminutive; but, though slender, well-proportioned. His features were variable, and somewhat irregular; and he was beardless; an unusual quantity of fair hair falling in heavy curls on his shoulders. Boy as I was, I could detect that he was vain from the protrusion of his well-turned foot; from the nice conduct of his delicately white hand, which with a lax wrist hung from the arm of his chair; and from his habit of tossing the hair from his brow with one demonstrative sweep of the head.

He was a very accomplished man. And how soft and gentle in his tone and manner! How deferential! too much so, indeed, to a

lad like myself. How tenderly respectful in his attentions to my mother; who received his polite and solicitous courtesies rather ungraciously sometimes, although "dear Philip" had been often too forward on her lips to be recalled. All this, and thoughts and fancies that grew out of it, passed through my brain before I went to sleep that night.

It was necessary that I should devote certain hours of each day to my studies, that I might prepare myself for college. Accordingly, just so much of my time was occupied, as prevented the remainder from becoming tedious. The state of my mother's health forbade the reception of much company; but two or three dinners were given in honour of my arrival, and to introduce me as the heir of Westwood. My claim to that title was, of course, never doubted; but it was clearly the desire of my mother to impress upon the minds of the gentry of our division of the county, that my interests had been duly cared for; and that Mr. Garston and herself were not in the slightest degree beholden to me for the maintenance of the position they occupied.

It was after one of these dinners that Mr. Meredith took an opportunity of drawing me aside to ask me my opinion of my stepfather. I answered that, so far as I was competent to judge, he was a man of varied and minute knowledge on many points in which the world in general took little interest, and towards which I had not as yet detected in myself any strong bias; but that perhaps such people were useful in the world, as depositories, if not sometimes as directors of the public taste. I added that he appeared to be extremely amiable, and well suited to my mother; who was of a gentle nature, and who could sympathise, if she could not go along with, his enthusiasm on matters of archaeology and art.

"Ah! there it is," said Meredith, "he is a man of taste,—and that's why I don't like him. An undue portion, often the whole, of the minds of these people is devoted to virtue, to the entire neglect of all the duties and obligations that lie before them in daily life. Why, sir, that young peer" (meaning Byron, who had not long published his fourth canto of *Childe Harold*) "has turned so many heads, that I don't know how Canova has managed, or will manage, to make them look like rational beings in marble. Every lady and gentleman fresh from Rome and Florence torments you with the Apollo Belvedere. Twang goes the long-bow in raptures concerning him. Meanwhile, who cares for Niobe and her children? Actual Want, that monstrous boa-constrictor whose convolutions torture so many worthy families, is an unheeded agency, because an actual one. But pray mark with wonder and admiration how well the venomous asp does his work in stone upon poor old Laocoön and his boys. As to the Dying Gladiator, I am one of those

Goths who would willingly glut my ire upon the fools who gape at him. Mr. Garston!"

That gentleman heard the call, and approached with noiseless grace.

"My dear sir?" He held Meredith in high respect.

"A plain question, Mr. Garston. Arthur and I have been talking of art. Now, what would not you give more for a mutilated trunk—a torso, I think you call it—of that worthy fellow who fiddled while Rome was burning—Nero, than would render easy for life two or three poor old fellows who are at present pensioners of the Society for Decayed Musicians?"

Mr. Garston smiled; but, with a shrug and an appealing look at me.

"Heaven forbid," said he, "that a love of art should extinguish our sympathies. A possession of the memorials of genius is ill acquired when it involves a neglect of the claims of merit in distress."

"It is all very well," observed Meredith, when Mr. Garston left us, which was after a few minutes' talk; "but I never yet knew an enthusiast who was not selfish and cold-hearted. Garston may not be so; and if he is, he certainly takes pains to appear otherwise, which carries a sort of merit along with it. But what puzzles me, is the extraordinary footing on which your mother and he seem to stand in relation to each other. His assiduities would be comical, if they did not set one upon striving to guess as to the motive of them; which is not altogether one of politeness or respect. Yet, though these are constant and unvaried, I find a great diversity in her manner of accepting them. He seems to be playing a well-studied part; whilst she has not yet made up her mind to assume one, nor decided about what part it shall be that she is to play. She must settle that point quickly, or people will begin to suspect something, and exchange suspicions. Observe them now."

I did so. But I had often observed them before; and my suspicions had been already awakened. Thenceforth I watched more narrowly; and, I was at last confirmed in my belief that the cause of my mother's strange behaviour towards her husband—which, to the casual and indifferent spectator, must have appeared like caprice, or affectation, or ill-temper, was partly to be referred to a young girl who waited upon her in the capacity of lady's maid.

This girl was of Italian birth, and had been brought from Italy by my mother; who, having taken a liking to her when a child, had reared her in her own household; may almost be said to have adopted her. This girl—her name was Anna—was not even pretty; and, making every allowance for the indulgence with which she had been so long treated, and the familiarity which had almost been conceded by such indulgence, the boldness of her carriage, and the measuring, the

scrutinising glance of her eyes whenever she deigned to cast them upon me, argued an audacity that ought not to have been tolerated. She was, from the first, no favourite of mine. She was, however, intelligent, of a high spirit, and of a candid, generous, and affectionate nature. One merit she possessed in my eyes, or rather in my ears:—her own lovely language fell from her lips with singular grace and sweetness. I did not fail to notice that whenever Anna came into the room, and Mr. Garston chanced to be present, a suspension of employment on his part was the immediate consequence. If he was talking to me, as few words were used as were absolutely required to complete the sentence, and these were poor and tame, and sometimes incoherent. If he was reading, he would steal his eyes from the volume, and regard the girl with a startled look, next transferring them to his wife, as though he would read in her countenance what effect was produced by Anna's whispered words. My mother, I perceived, detected all this. On these occasions there was an impatient irritation of manner whilst she listened, or gave directions to the girl. She would sometimes angrily dismiss her, to recall her presently, when the same scene would be acted over again.

I was old enough to draw conclusions from what passed, and from what, on each succeeding occasion I saw with a more sharpened vigilance. Yet, strange to say, my mother and Mr. Garston were quite unaware that I found for myself any such occupation; regarding me as a lubberly boy without eyesight or understanding. I conjectured sometimes that each was so anxious to conceal from the other what feelings were in operation that they never once thought of my presence; or, if they did, that no suspicion ever crossed them that I was a deeply interested looker-on.

Having accustomed myself to observe every act, every word, and every look of my mother and Mr. Garston, and to lay them on the rack of ingenuity, that I might extract from them materials towards filling up the outline of what I had preconceived, I succeeded at last in elaborating such a picture as I could not gaze upon without pain and mortification. I conceived something very like a loathing of Mr. Garston, and I was deeply distressed for my mother, whose health and spirits were rapidly wasting away. That he was the cause of this, I felt convinced,—and I hated him for it. The second Mrs. Garston, indeed! Westwood House was hardly the place for settling the preliminaries of such a contract. Anna had an equal share of my hatred.

One day Mr. Garston had gone to a town a few miles distant, to attend a sale of the furniture and effects of a gentleman lately deceased; who had been long celebrated for his taste in sculpture and painting, and whose gallery contained several famous works of art. He had been very unwilling to go;

although, his attendance there had been an understood thing for some weeks previously. My mother urged his departure with an earnestness that her love of art—nay, more than that—the love she knew her husband bore towards it, by no means served to make intelligible. It was curious, that the more strongly she urged his departure, the more reasons he produced for staying at home; until these, becoming frivolous, and at last futile, he acquiesced.

Coming out of my room, intending a walk after three hours desultory reading, I saw Anna seated in a recess of one of the windows in the gallery. She was weeping bitterly, and my heart a little relented towards her. I would have asked the cause of her distress; but, looking up, and perceiving me, she hastily fled.

I saw nothing of my mother during the day. She excused herself from coming down to dinner on the plea of a violent headache; and this message was delivered to me by one of the maid-servants, and not by Anna; who was probably in close attendance upon her mistress. Towards evening, however, my mother made her appearance. She, too, had been weeping, and was now in such a state of nervous excitement as I had never before witnessed. I was surprised at her manner of pacing the room. Years past, and in her full health, she had never been accustomed to move so rapidly. I became alarmed, and begged her to sit down.

"It is very cold," she said; "the wind is sharp enough to cut one in pieces."

"My dear mother," I said, "you must be very ill. It is a mild and beautiful evening. Let me ring for a shawl for you. Anna shall bring one."

"Anna? Anna is gone."

"Gone! Where?"

"No matter. What is the time?"

I could just discern the hands of the clock on the mantel-piece.

"It is nearly eight."

"Philip—Mr. Garston, I mean—should have been home long before this," and she began to weep.

I endeavoured to soothe and console her; but, for a long while, in vain.

"There is such a weight upon my heart, Arthur," she said, "as I never felt before."

"It is your illness, dear mother."

"Perhaps so."

She fell into a fit of musing, during which—it appeared from words that dropped from her at intervals—a succession of circumstances were passing before her mind. Suddenly a loud shriek burst from her.

"What is that?"

"What?"

"I saw a face—a frightful face—glaring through the window. We must not be left alone. Call in the servants! Hark!"

"I hear nothing."

Her terror, causeless though it was, began to seize me.

"Hush! yes—it is so! It is my husband's step. Thank God!"

She was right. The door opened, and Garston entered the room.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

WHEN Mr. Garston opened the door and admitted himself, he closed it after him in the manner of one who fears that somebody is pursuing him. Whether by accident or design I know not, but he shot the small bolt under the lock. He then made a few paces into the room, and stood still. I could see through the deepening twilight his white hands at his breast, revolving round each other. At length he took a seat.

There was a silence which appeared to me unusually protracted, although perhaps two minutes could not have passed before I broke it.

"And so, sir, you have returned from the sale?" I observed.

He made no answer. I was perplexed.

"Did you make any purchases?"

Still no reply; although a sound proceeded from his lips which I can find no word for.

Astonished, and a little frightened, I arose, rang the bell for candles, drew a chair and sat down by the side of Garston. I touched him gently on the arm. He seized my hand and held it tightly; but, in a minute, it was needful that I should disengage myself; for the servant could not enter the room, the door being fastened. Foreseeing something, although I knew not what, I took the candles from the man, and bade him retire. The light I brought with me fell upon Garston. My mother checked a scream.

"That face at the window! Look at him! He is ill. Go to him, Arthur."

It was with no readiness that I did my mother's bidding. That face might have stayed the impulse of his dearest friend to fly to his assistance. It was not disturbed; but the look was unalterably fixed, as though all the human emotions—joy, grief, anger, compassion, and the rest—were never again to find a place there.

"What is the matter?" I exclaimed. "And what, in the name of Heaven, has happened?"

"Ill—very ill—wine—some wine," he gasped, pointing to the sideboard.

It did not occur to me until after I had poured two glasses down his throat, that he never drank wine. This, however, did him good, and awakened him to a consciousness of his condition. He rubbed, or rather chafed his hands, and endeavoured to bring a smile to his lips.

"Foolish! absurd!" he said. "I have terrified your mother, Arthur; and really without a cause—no cause whatever, I assure you."

"There must be some cause for so much

agitation," said my mother, with assumed coldness; "you would not frighten us heedlessly."

"The cause having passed away," he replied, "I heed it not, save as it has given rise to alarm on my account, which I regret. This is excellent wine. It may be that, unaccustomed to stimulants, I exaggerate its excellence."

He now began to speak of the sale, and to enlarge upon some incidents that had occurred there, with a rapidity and a flippancy that surprised my mother; who secretly motioned me to withdraw the decanter. As I leaned forward to do this, he laid his hand upon mine. "Nay!" said he.

"Forgive me," I replied, laughing. "I was about to obey my mother, who evidently suspects that the praise you were just now bestowing upon the wine was a tribute to its excellence, as compared with a bottle or two of some other vintage recently tasted. Come now, confess, Mr. Garston, that you have for once been betrayed into a slight excess. Your late appearance and manner are now explained. Had I noticed the disorder of your cravat when you came in, I should have needed no further proof."

He hastened to arrange that portion of his dress, but with trembling hands. His face blanched before he had completed the task.

"You have found me out, Mr. Arthur," he said, with a ghastly leer, intended to pass for an arch glance. "Not that I have sinned to any great extent. But, delicately organised as I am, anything like a scene deranges my nerves. There was a dispute at the sale between me and a gentleman as ardent as myself. We were both in the wrong. In the fracas which ensued, of course I came off the worst."

"The fracas!" exclaimed my mother.

"You were not hurt?"

"Shaken a little."

"No further consequences are likely to arise?"

"None whatever. All proper explanations were given on both sides. We parted very good friends."

It was impossible not to perceive, whilst my mother questioned him concerning all the particulars of this rencontre, how she loved the man. It was equally clear that there was something on her mind in relation to him: something she was afraid to communicate, or that she wished should be withheld from him. I do not believe, however, that Garston noticed this. He seemed too intent on keeping watch upon the motions of his own mind; answering everything that was demanded of him as if he were upon oath.

On my part, I began to see how the case stood. Anna was gone. Had she been dismissed, or had she parted of her own accord? In either event, Garston was the cause of her leaving. Probably he anticipated some

disclosure. He now dreaded a scene in which (unaware that she had left the house) he imagined Anna might bear a part. I was confirmed in this suspicion when, on rising to retire for the night, I caught his appealing look, and was induced at his entreaty to resume my seat for a further half-hour.

My mother rang the bell. "I, at least, must leave you. I have exceeded my usual hour. Tell Martha"—to the servant who approached—"tell Martha to wait for me in my room. She will attend me for the future."

As she said this, she fixed her eyes on Garston. He made no comment, and showed no surprise. A slight flush of indignation rose to her brow; but she trembled.

"Are you aware, Philip, that Anna has left me?" she said.

"Aware! How could that be? Impossible!"

"True. The child is dear to me, and I have done for the best. She gave me reasons which I deemed sufficient, and I have studied her welfare. And now, Mr. Garston, not another word of this. I thought to have spoken to you alone; but it is as well as it is. Good-night!"

So saying, my mother arose. Mr. Garston did not, as was his wont, spring to the door, nor leave his wife till she was in the hands of her maid. That was my task this evening.

"Mr. Garston looks very ill," she said, as she entered her chamber. "Prevail upon him to retire at once." She sighed heavily when she kissed me.

On my return to the parlour, I found that Garston had emptied the decanter. He was leaning against the wall, his hands pressed against his head. On seeing me, he said with unnatural quickness, "I would have you to believe that there is nothing whatever the matter with me. Trifles sometimes strike upon the delicate fibres of the mind, and make them give forth plaintive memories. The tone of your mother's voice overcame me a minute since. She is an angel of goodness—of beneficence past expression."

In spite of my distrust of Garston, I was touched. "She is most kind, affectionate, and gentle," I observed.

"Words that belong to many," he replied. "Let them wear such praise as may be woven out of them. They apply not to her, save with a meagre and a detracting insufficiency. Love! I shall not profane my soul by supposing that such a passion could issue from it, to be offered to her. Mine is worship—adoration!"

The tones of his voice were in ill accordance with the words to which they gave such singular expression. His actions were no less inappropriate. If somebody had put him upon self-justification, he could not have been more vehement.

"I tell you what, Arthur," he said, taking a chair by my side, and lowering his voice, after looking round the room suspiciously, as if he were fearful of being overheard. "I was not surprised—not at all—when your mother told me that Anna is gone. I have been expecting this a long time. We shall probably never hear of her again."

"Why should you suspect this?"

"Ungrateful, sir—ungrateful, and malignant. She has long been endeavouring to create disunion between your mother and myself. No doubt she did so to-day, and was dismissed accordingly."

This rekindled my curiosity.

"I can hardly think that," I remarked. "My mother was very fond of Anna."

He was silent for some moments. At length, he said abruptly:

"It was my fear lest your mother should be discomposed by this event, that was partly the cause of my illness."

"Indeed!—before you knew it?"

He turned very pale. "I had long expected it," he answered quickly, "I told you so. Did you not hear me? But come—let us to bed. I wish her no ill—far from it. May she be happy."

We took our candles and went together up-stairs. As we stood at his chamber door, I could not help remarking upon his extreme illness.

"It will pass off," he said. "I have a cordial here which will set all to rights. You get to bed. You will soon be asleep." Good night."

He entered his chamber and closed the door. As he walked to the further end of the room I heard him ejaculate something passionately.

When in my bedroom, I felt no disposition to sleep. I sat down, therefore, and turned over in my mind the extraordinary scene that had passed before me during the last few hours. On a review of the whole, and of the inferences I had attempted to draw from every word, every gesture, every change of countenance of the chief actor, I was compelled to abandon the conclusion at which I had previously arrived, without obtaining any ground on which to build another. What doubts and suspicions arose in my mind—although I remember them well—it is needless to relate, since they were wide of the truth.

A considerable time must have elapsed since I had first given way to my reflections; for, when a sense of chillness awoke me out of them, I discovered that my candle had burnt out. There was, however, abundance of light. The moon had sketched the shadow of the window across the floor and on the wall; and, looking on my watch, I saw distinctly that it was past two. The silence was of an intensity which imposes itself upon your every movement. I walked softly towards the bed. What noise is that?

My heart beat. I listened. Surely, Mr. Garston's door is being opened with a care and caution that means more than an anxiety lest the repose of the inmates of the house should be disturbed. Certainly there is the tiptoe tread of shoeless feet along the passage. With a like care and caution I opened my own door. Garston's was closed. No. I could not be mistaken. The desire to follow him was strong within me, though I never asked myself why it should be so. Indeed, I gave myself no time for balancing reasons; but hastened along the passage. Leaning over the balustrade of the gallery, I saw Garston below, in the hall, in the act of placing his shoes on the pavement. He put them on, and proceeded to the door; which he unlocked and unbolted so noiselessly that it seemed to open of itself. He stood irresolutely for some minutes, and then gently drew the door after him, leaving it ajar. By this time I had descended to the lowest flight; and, on his disappearance, I hastened into the hall, crossed it, drew back the door, and looked abroad on either side. He had emerged from the deep shadow of the house, and was making his way towards the stables. Here he was lost to me for some minutes; but, as there was no egress in that direction, I awaited his reappearance with a rapt anticipation that forbade impatience. At length he reappeared. As he came more into the light, I saw that he was carrying something in his hand. It was a spade. He proceeded to a gate, got over it, and entered a high-hedged lane some two miles in length.

What was the meaning of this? Where was Garston going?—what was he about to do?

I was drawn on after him to the gate by insatiable curiosity. I mounted it, but with no intention of following in Garston's wake. From its topmost bar I climbed up a bank, and crept through a gap into an elevated field. A narrow path skirted the lofty hedge; and, through this, I could at intervals discern the lonely man, sometimes halting, sometimes hastening, I knew not whither; the spade grasped with both hands and pressed closely against his bosom. Twice he turned about suddenly, and made a motion as though he would return; but no—it must not be: his ungrateful errand must be accomplished: he must go onward. His action said this plainly.

He was now about to enter the vale. It is narrow and of some length; the hills on either side being clothed to the very top with soft and undulating verdure. At one extremity stands a mansion (untenanted at that time), at the other is the high road. For a minute or two I kept Garston in my eye from the ascent on which I stood; but it was needful, if I would witness the issue of this strange excursion, that I should make my way

through the wood, down to its edge. I had effected this, when I saw Garston ascending directly towards me. Alarmed, I retraced my steps with all speed, and all silence. It was some minutes before I durst venture to descend to my former position; and when I did, Garston had struck into the wood, and was lost to me. What was now to be done? Curiosity unslaked just when it is about to be satisfied, is accompanied by a feeling of disappointment and chagrin, to which youth especially cannot very readily submit. Reluctant to depart, I yet began to be fearful of remaining. I must have been vibrating in this state of hesitation a full quarter of an hour (I found by what followed that it was so), when a sound of parting branches fell on my ear from a distance. I approached. Twigs and fallen leaves crashed and rustled under rapid human footsteps, and what seemed to be a white figure, shot past me—so near that I might have almost touched it—and rushed into the level swarded space before it, where it stood motionless: its shadow marking the ground blackly.

It was Garston. He no longer carried the spade, and had divested himself of his coat and waistcoat. He dropped down upon his knees, his expanded hands raised towards Heaven, to which with quivering lips he offered an agonised prayer; for I heard the word, Mercy, many times repeated.

At length he rose, passing his hands over his limbs smartly but lightly, as though thereby he swept off what hung loosely about his person. He then stamped, as if to extinguish it; and, turning away, ascended to the wood, and entered it nearly at the point from which he had issued; murmuring as he passed the tree behind which I stood, "Sad—sad—a lifetime of unutterable misery earned in one short mad moment!"

Whilst the foregoing scene was enacting, I neither stirred hand nor foot, held to the spot by terror and amazement. But now I prepared to follow Garston still more closely.

I held him in view till he had attained the top of the hill, when it behoved me so to dispose myself that he should not see me. This was easily done. Nature had not been left entirely to her own will at this spot. A circular space had been planted with shrubs, which had grown to a considerable height. There was an opening at which a door had probably at one time been placed. In the centre were the ruins of an old summer-house. After some delay, Garston entered at the opening. I watched him through the foliage, now thinned by the autumn. The spade was standing in the ground a few paces from the decaying entrance to the once gaily-painted pavilion. He took the spade in his hand and began to dig.

Now I knew that he was making a grave, and that the body which was to occupy it was not far away. I turned very faint

and sick: well knowing what I had next to see, I had no heart left in me to prepare myself against it; and when Garston, having rushed into the summer-house, came forth bearing the body of Anna, the close proximity of the two faces—the one all ghastly death, the other all active and convulsed life, I shrieked aloud, and I became insensible.

I could not have lain long in this state; for Garston was still within the enclosure, filling up the grave. I looked no more in that direction, but got upon my feet as well as I was able, descended the wooded hill into the vale, and at last reached the high road. It was a further way back than I had come; but Garston could not get home before me. There was something for him yet to do—I had seen that.

What thoughts occupied me as I pursued my way, I cannot distinctly recall. I remember once hurrying along at headlong speed; having been seized with panic which brought a sense that some one—Garston himself—was pursuing me; but, approaching the village, my self-possession returned to me. I remember the small windows of the cottages, with their diamond-shaped panes shining in the opening morning's light. A cock crowed in the distance; but this was the only sound. Not a human being was astir. The indescribable quietude of the place filled me with awe; and I glided along like a criminal.

I found the door of the house as I had left it, and crept to my own room. Once again in my chamber, I felt myself secure. The ticking of my watch on the drawers called my attention to it. Could it be that little more than two hours had comprised all that I had witnessed? I walked to the glass; but instantly drew back from what it disclosed to me. Why that face—that look of horror and of guilt? What had I done that I must carry the curse of Cain upon my brow?

I bathed my face and hands in the cool water, smoothed my hair, and then sat down to think—to think resolutely and manfully,—and to decide at once what was best to be done in a case to which, I was stopped short by reflecting, there was no parallel in anything I had heard or read. What was, indeed, to be done? I wrung my hands in despair. Mr. Oatway had often impressed upon me that our peace of mind is ever in our own power; that all the vicissitudes and afflictions of life may be borne patiently, joyfully, so long as we fear God and obey His commandments. Yet what could melt out of my memory a scene which must for ever abide there and torment me; a scene of which I was a witness; in the crowning horror of which I was almost a partaker? But why should I bear another's sin? Let the wretch carry his own burden until he should fling it from him at the foot of the gallows.

I was interrupted. The near and nearer approach of soft footsteps—the nice and crafty

turning of the handle of the door—its closing, save to my quickened sense, inaudible. Garston had returned.

DOCTOR VERON'S TIME.

EVERYBODY goes to Paris, everybody goes to the Palais Royal in Paris, everybody may like a glimpse of the Palais Royal in Doctor Véron's time.

Who was Doctor Véron? What about him? Doctor Véron was a Doctor of Medicine; Louis Véron, erst extern of the Hospital of La Charité; then, as his enemies maliciously maintain, but as he strenuously denies, a journeyman apothecary; subsequently and successively renowned as the inventor of a much-puffed and richly-remunerative pectoral nostrum, the *Pâte Regnault*; as manager of the Grand Opéra, proprietor of the Constitutionnel, confidential friend of Louis Napoleon (who has given his confidential friend something very much resembling the cold shoulder lately), as a millionaire, a bon-vivant very erudite in rich viands and choice wines; lastly, as possessing a sort of comic glory as an author. All men laugh at the doctor's six closely-printed volumes of the *Mémoires d'un Bourgeois de Paris*; they ridicule his pompous fanfaronnades, his egotism, and his elaborated gossip; yet all men read the *Mémoires* of Mimi Véron. The circulation of the book has been prodigious; nor is this to be wondered at; for it can easily be understood how much there must be both curious and interesting, in six volumes of naïve confessions by the man who brought out Robert le Diable, who dined with Talleyrand, who swayed the editorial sceptre of the once thunderer of the French press, the Constitutionnel, who was intimate with Rossini, Thiers, Guizot, Alexandre Dumas, Victor Hugo, George Sand, Cinti Damoreau, Rachel, and Taglionii.

But I leave the detailed consideration of the Doctor's Memoirs (which extend over the space of time from the end of the first Empire to the commencement of the second) to the reviewers. Be it mine to walk in the Palais Royal with the Doctor Véron—the Palais Royal of forty years ago—and to let him initiate me into some of the secrets of that dreadful Palais-Royal Playmare which haunted the locality and made French grandmothers, ay and some of our English grandmothers too, turn pale and tremble.

To the T. G. who takes a South-Eastern return ticket, expends five shillings in the purchase of a passport, more or less complimentary from the urbane Consul General in King William Street, wonders what sort of aid and assistance it may be that the authorities, civil and military are so politely requested to extend to him en cas de besoin, and gets rid of a ten-pound note or so in a trip to Paris and back, the Palais Royal is a delicious garden-quadangle where he may

walk in the fine weather, sip his iced lemonade and smoke his indifferent cigar outside the *Café de la Rotonde*, hear the bubble of the fountains, watch the pretty little children at play, and if he be so minded, attempt a platonic flirtation with one of the comely, lace-capped Norman Bonnes. In wet weather it supplies him with an unequalled promenade, sheltered from the pattering rain, in the shape of four magnificent arcades, where he may lounge, loaf, or flâne at his leisure, among a well-dressed throng, apparently as idle as himself; admire the costly jewellery in the shops, and the scarcely less sparkling sham gems in the Hebrew bijoutiers' open marts; speculate on the coats, waistcoats, and dressing-gowns of pattern and colour astounding as their cheapness; satiate his artistic longings with peeps at Sèvres and Dresden porcelain, *pâte tendre*, vermeil, Parian statuettes and Malachite caskets; train up his appetite in the way it should go by gazing at glowing panoramas of rare eatables and drinkables displayed in the larders of the great Restaurants, and in the window of the immortal Chevet (shall the glory of that great man ever be dimmed by the rising constellation of his rivals Potel and Chabot in the *Rue Vivienne*—never, I hope); wonder how many thousands of francs have been spent at Madame Prévost's flower shops, how many of the donors of the two louis bouquets are beggared now, and how many of the recipients dead; read the play-bills on the posts by the pleasant little Palais Royal Theatre; admire his own charms in the pier-glasses of the *Galerie de Valois*; and see what there is new in literature at the bookstalls where you may turn over the yellow-covered volumes as long as you like, even unto dog's-earing, and no man importunes you, querulously to buy. And in all seasons of the day or night and variations of the weather, the Palais Royal is to the traveller a great temple dedicated to Apicius and Lucullus, where, if his purse be well lined, he may obtain the best breakfasts, dinners, and wines in the world.

But Doctor Louis Véron, Burgess of Paris, shows us quite a different Palais Royal. He remembers the old days of the first empire; when General Daumesnil gave an oyster breakfast to all the officers of the garrison of Vincennes in the cellars of the *Frères Rovençaux*; on which occasion this underground banquetting hall was brilliantly illuminated, and every wine-bin was surmounted by a scutcheon bearing the name of the year and the vintage of each wine, and when, it is almost needless to say, the officers of the garrison of Vincennes drank of every year and of every vintage, and drank much deeper than the cellars they were in. The doctor recollects when, on official fête days and rejoicings for victories, there were scrambles in the Palais-Royal Gardens among the mob for sausages, loaves, and roast turkeys (the tra-

ditions of these edible scrambles existed even unto the advent of empire number two), and when wine was served out indiscriminately from hogsheds and buckets placed on scaffolds, defended from the too-ardent irruption of the thirsty souls of Paris by the *Forts de la Halle* (market porters), with their arms braced together. He brings back memories of the famous military Palais Royal cafés, where the emperor's braves trailed their long swords, clanged their long spurs, twisted their long mustachios, called the civilian "Pekin," and threatened to cut off his ears. Often has the doctor—no doctor then, but a smock-faced youth—peeped with awe, admiration, and envy into one of these abodes of glory, and seen the sons of Mars sitting round a bowl of burning punch, whose bluish flame was kept up with as much assiduity as though it had been the sacred fire of the vestals, and drinking confusion to the Austrian Eagle and death to the English Leopard. He remembers the great gourmand M. d'Aigrefeuille, who almost invariably dined with the as great gourmand the Archichancellor Cambacérès, and as invariably over-ate himself; then, taking a digestive walk in the Palais Royal, would stop before the *Café de Foy*, and make a particularly significant bow, which the cunning waiter within understanding full well, a servitor would presently emerge from the café and bring the gastric-dolorous gourmet a glass of iced water. The doctor recollects the shop of the famous military bootmaker Sakowsky, he who furnished the hero of the snow-white plume—the gay and gallant Murat—with his gold-tasselled Hessian of scarlet morocco; and he remembers the equally renowned magasin of Berchut, who proudly designated himself Tailor to all the Marshals of France. And, above all, can the doctor call to mind those fatal timber-roofed passages of the Palais Royal, the ominous *Galerie de Bois*, which were run up in haste during the Reign of Terror on the site of the stables of the Orleans family, but which existed for more than twenty years afterwards, the haunt of all that was beautiful and wicked, gay and depraved, criminal and frivolous, in Paris.

It has often occurred to me that there is a condition and period of Parisian life about which we know very little more than we do of the interior of Japan. I mean the Paris of the first Napoleon: its habits and manners. We have accurate pictures of the Ancien Régime, of the Terror, of the Restoration, of the Monarchy of July; and since then the Paris correspondence of every newspaper has kept us au fait with the minutest doings of the gay capital of civilisation. But that long stern war which lasted from eighteen hundred and two till eighteen hundred and fifteen, that deadly mutual hatred of French and English, that rigorous blockade, that maleficent continental

system, effected a virtual hiatus of twelve years in our social knowledge of Paris. Political news was garbled and mis-stated and pruning-knived enough, but of domestic intelligence we were utterly deprived during the war. The English flocked of course to Paris, when the allied armies made their entries, but how many fashions, usances, phases of manners had been born, and had died since Charles James Fox had dined with the Consul Buonaparte at Malmaison after the peace of Amiens? Knowing how little is known of the social aspect of the first French Empire, I very respectfully commend the subject to the ingenious author of "Purple Tints of Paris." He will find plenty of authorities in old files of French newspapers—let him give some purple tints of the city of the first Napoleon.

Meanwhile has Doctor Véron anything more to tell us concerning the Palais Royal? More, ay marry! this. You are to remember this, traveller, next time you visit the enchanting quadrangle of restaurants and arcades: that from the number nine to the number twenty-four inclusive there was nothing but gaming-houses. From the number one twenty-nine to the number one thirty-seven gaming-houses. The number one hundred and fifty-four, so called, but extending really from the hundred and forty-fifth to the hundred and fifty-fourth, gaming-houses. Besides these Palais-Royal Hades, there were other public gaming-houses in Paris, namely, the Cercle des Etrangers, in the Rue Grange Batelière; the Maison de Livry (better known as Frascati's) at the corner of the Rue de Richelieu; the Maison Dunans, in the Rue du Mont Blanc; the Maison Marivaux, in the street of that name; the Maison Paphos in the Rue du Temple; and the Maison Dauphine in the Rue Dauphine. Besides these public and authorised gaming-houses, there was an infinity of occult Hades—tripots, gambling table d'hôtes, cafés, and even cabarets.

These were more gallico-centralised and enregistered under the title of "la Ferme des Jeux." In other words, the gaming-houses were farmed out to a speculator, who was bound to pay into the Government treasury in monthly payments a sum amounting annually to five millions five hundred and fifty thousand francs—about two hundred and twenty thousand pounds sterling. Out of this sum one million six hundred and sixty thousand francs were allocated in subsidies to the theatres, to the Conservatory of Music, and to the Hospital of the Quinze-Vingts. The rest went to the Ville de Paris, which is sufficiently vague. Fancy a few hundred thousands of pounds going annually to our city in the palmy days of Crockford's and taken from the profits of that immaculate establishment! It must not be omitted to state that the last farmer of the games, Monsieur Bénazet, was at the July

Revolution elected commander of one of the legions of the National Guard of the Seine (so, by the way, was Coignard the escaped convict, falsely calling himself Comte de Sainte Hélène), and that Louis Philippe's minister, Casimir Périer, created this prince of gambling-house bonnets a knight of the Legion of Honour! O, honour! O, liberty! O, Madame Roland!

The Cercle des Etrangers united to its gaming attributes balls and suppers. Under the Directory, the Consulate, and the commencement of the Empire, there was a frenzy for bal masqués at these dens. The Baroness Hamelin, Madame Tallien—all the famous women of that famous time—used to go to these balls. Napoleon himself used to visit them occasionally, but only for a few minutes at a time, masked, and leaning on the arm of Duroc. Once, Bonaparte, when consul, had determined to close the gaming-houses; but he was dissuaded from his purpose by the astute and unscrupulous Fouché, who represented to him that the Hades of the Palais Royal afforded him the most trustworthy and prolific resources for police purposes: so, to serve the meritorious spy system, public gaming still continued to be authorised. The gambling-houses continued in full swing during the whole epoch of the Restoration. They were finally closed, by a vote of the Chamber of Deputies in eighteen hundred and thirty-seven. Within Doctor Véron's time there was a farmer licensed to deal in games called Boursault. This industrial, besides being fermier des jeux, added to it the congenial occupation of contractor for emptying the public cloaca, and he participated with M. Sanson the hangman in the fantastic merit of a passionate taste for horticulture. How often a garden implement on his smooth verdant lawn must have reminded him of that other rake on the green baize gambling table! The daisies on the sward must have glistened in his eyes like the double napoleons on the tapis vert of the rouge et noir table. An allowance of two millions, four hundred thousand francs was made to the golden farmers for the frais de régie—the expenses of keeping up the gaming-houses; but as the rent, salaries, &c., fell far short of this sum, a very pretty penny was always sure to enter into the pocket of the farmer. To make an end of statistics, I will state one little fact on Doctor Véron's authority:—the gross sum lost at play in the public gaming-houses of Paris in the ten years extending from eighteen hundred and nineteen to eighteen hundred and twenty-nine, amounted to 137,313,403*fr.* 81*c.*—ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SEVEN MILLIONS, THREE HUNDRED AND THIRTEEN THOUSAND, FOUR HUNDRED AND THREE FRANCS, AND EIGHTY-ONE CENTIMES! The money lost by provincials and foreigners formed, of course, an immense proportion of this prodigious sum.

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ALL UP WITH EVERYTHING.

WE are very sorry to hear it, but the world positively must go this time. A little longer lease is probably desired by several persons of distinction, and even by the obscure public in general; but fate and Monsieur Eugène Huzar are against it.

We wouldn't believe Mnedomochius; we wouldn't believe Solomon Eagle; we wouldn't believe John of Leyden, or Johanna Southcote, or Thom the Kentish prophet—and madman. We won't even at this time of day be persuaded to place much credence in the Reverend Sturges Boobyer, who announces the proximate end of the world in Greenwich Park (left hand side of the Observatory) every Sunday afternoon during the summer months. We won't believe Mr. Jelinger Symon's new theory of the non-rotation of the moon, authorised as it is by the fact of the theorist being her Majesty's Inspector of Schools, and illustrated as it is by an ingenious little machine, which ought to prove everything, but doesn't prove anything. We won't believe in spirit-rapping, mediums, curveting tables, and dancing ottomans. We have lost our faith in the Cock Lane Ghost, in Elizabeth Canning, in George Psalmazar, in the Mysterious Lady, in the South Sea Company, and in witchcraft, and in the efficacy of horse-shoes nailed against barn-doors as a preventive thereof. We did believe strongly in BARNUM—not in his honesty, but in his power of making money; and lo! Barnum is burst up, and we refuse to believe in him any more, and almost wonder how we came to believe in him at all. How, then, are we to believe Monsieur Eugène Huzar, who not only tells us why the world is to come to an end, but how, and when, and all about it. A terrible man for vaticination is this gentleman with the martial name and the philanthropic tendencies, and a terrible book has he written—ay, and printed—yes, forsooth, and published, too, in the Glazed Gallery of the Palais Royal—called, "*La Fin du Monde*," The End of the World. Through sin, war, pestilence, famine? No; through Science!

This spasmodic little volume, which is sufficient to throw a weak man into a tremor of astonishment, and a strong man into con-

vulsions of laughter, wears on its title page a woodcut of mystic mark and meaning. There is a terrestrial globe; and encircling it is our intimate enemy, the serpent, with his tail in his mouth. This, an emblem of Eternity, has been, I apprehend, done before Monsieur Huzar's time. But mark the accompanying motto: "*Ce qui a été sera*"—That which has been, will be—which is a rather bold paraphrase of the Duke of Bedford's motto, "*Che sara, sara*;" and is, on *prima facie* consideration, as seemingly paradoxical as the inquiry of the imperfectly-in-English-educated Frenchman of the German, "*Did it rain to-morrow?*" To which the Teuton, whose acquaintance with English grammar was equally imperfect, responded, "*Yes, it vas!*" But Monsieur Huzar is prepared to prove that what has been will be; for, according to him, the past is only the mirror of the future. He seems to have been convinced of the truth of this intuition through scientific experiments made under his own eyes during a too-celebrated course of scientific lectures. Seeing these infinitesimal atoms—those invisible fluids—those intangible gases—produce effects so terrible and so unexpected, he asked himself if man, unceasingly extending his domination over the elements of nature, would not in the end, involuntarily and fatally for himself, draw down one of those catastrophes which belong to the last days of a hyper-civilised, and hyper-scientific era. Thus, he divides his work into three parts,—the past, the present, and the future; uniting the three by one simple formula—to wit, that the pride of science, that old original mundane sin, and which had been the cause of man's fall in past ages, would again cause his fall in the future. And this formula, as M. Huzar says he perfectly understands it, but as I candidly confess I am thoroughly unable to do, corresponds to the three grand axioms of ancient philosophy: Where am I? Whence come I? Whither am I going? As regards the present, he seeks to prove that the diffusion of light, or of knowledge, or in other words, the march of intellect, must necessarily bring about indefinite progress, and, at last, a certain catastrophe. With respect to the past, he asserts—and rests his assertion on the whole of religious antiquity, whatever that may be—that the term original sin

means nothing more nor less than the exaggeration of science and power, ending at last fatally in the fall of man, and an universal catastrophe. Touching the future, the end of the world, M. Huzar, after a mature examination of all the theories of antiquity, has come to the conclusion that the end of the world will be disastrous, and that it will naturally result from the before-stated exaggeration of science and power: thus, what has been, will be.

"Why this book?" proceeds to ask Monsieur Huzar, in his prolegomena, and echo, in the shape of the majority of his readers, will repeat the question. Were the echo an Irish one, the response, I fancy, would not even be so complimentary. "How," asks Monsieur Huzar, proceeding to answer his own riddle, "could one refrain from being seized with admiration and wonder almost akin to terror in penetrating into these arcana, where at the mere volition of mankind, the very elements seem to respond with docility to the demonstrations of science. If the cycle of human knowledge goes on thus every day increasing, will not, one day, the conquest of the world become the patrimony of humanity?" Such were the grave reflections that Monsieur Huzar indulged in during a lecture upon the Compression of Gas, when a horrible noise, which he will never forget, he says, was heard; blood flowed in the amphitheatre; piercing cries were heard on all sides: the compressing apparatus had burst, and of the body of the unhappy demonstrator there remained only a charred and mangled fragment. A cold perspiration naturally covered our latter-day prophet's face. He lived, he says, a thousand years in the space of a second; but, leaving the lecture-hall, he was not contented with returning thanks to Heaven for having escaped being blown up: the latter days had appeared to him in all their awful terror: he had seen the thunder of Jupiter hurled at Prometheus; he had seen Bellerophon cast down from high heaven; so, going on his way, sighing and not rejoicing, he found the law of universal Palingenesis revealing itself to him; and he thus formulated it: that original sin was exaggerated and over-perfected science. This is the latter-day prophet's definition of the duration of ages. Many human cycles, according to him, have made their appearance, and have successively disappeared upon the planet. Human cycles continue to be renewed to infinity in the infinity of time; the planet has existed for millions of years; our historical cycle is but a second in the history of the world.

Adam, Prometheus, Brahma (Mars, Apollo virorum!) were the representative men of the cycle immediately preceding ours; they were the prototypes of civilisation carried to the extreme, and science pushed to infinity. But, enjoying unlimited liberty, they abused it; they thought themselves gods when they

were only men; they fell, and the world fell with them.

Adam, Prometheus, and Brahma, comfortably pulverised and fallen into chaos, among the ruins of a civilisation they wished to carry to too high a pitch, and which ruins have covered the earth for five thousand years, a new cycle commenced; but as heretofore, one of the most prominent characters in the new drama was the serpent—he who figures in all the religions of the ancient world, and who embraces worlds after having seduced them. This serpent is after all, but the symbol of exaggeration, of pride, of science, and of strength, which being able to do everything possible, next tries the impossible, and failing lamentably therein, "fails never to rise again." It will be the same one day, the latter-day prophet tells us, with our cycle. Man one day will wish to govern and direct the energies of nature; but there will arrive a moment when he will be no longer master of the power he has abused; then nature will have her revenge, and—it will be all up with everything.

There is a legend current in the side-scenes of provincial theatres, of a sixth-rate comedian in some bygone dramatic circuit, who had to enact a very trifling part in a Shakspearian play during the starring engagement of an eminent tragedian. The part, I think, is that of the Ambassador who tells King John that Philip of France threatens him with violent measures. At all events he had to answer a question addressed to him by the king in these words,

He will denounce on you a long and bloody war.

Now this comedian being short of memory, somewhat weak in intellect, and decidedly of nervous temperament, and mortally afraid of the tragedian, who was a wrathful man, went about the whole day, ceaselessly endeavouring to master the not very difficult line transcribed above. Night came at last; he made his entrance, he got his cue, and—his speech stuck in his throat. The words made themselves skates, and scudded away; verbal Tantalian waters welled up to his lips and then as suddenly retreated. He could not remember a word of what was set down for him; in short, to employ theatrical parlance, he stuck, and became an object of scorn to some, of compassion to others, of wonder to all. Suddenly, however, just as the tragedian's countenance was beginning to assume its most ominous expression, he remembered the sense, if not the exact diction of his speech, and in hot haste blurted out

There'll be a jolly row!

He was right in his generation: there was. The audience laughed, the tragedian foamed at the mouth with rage, and I believe the poor player was discharged next day; but wherein, save in mere verbal inaccuracy was he to blame? A war invariably comprehends a row; a long and bloody war must be

necessarily a jolly row; and even in the vague generality of the term I see an attention to the fitness of things that should, if we all got our deserts, have caused an augmentation of the unlucky actor's salary, rather than his dismissal from his situation. Now Monsieur Huzar, the latter-day prophet, seems inclined to be as great a generaliser as the country actor. He does not know exactly of what nature the great catastrophe on which he is continually dwelling is to be; he seems but to have a vague idea of it altogether, and to participate in the actor's opinion that there will be a jolly row. There will be one, probably.

"Where are we going?" asks the latter-day prophet. Where indeed! What is life, then? "It is the eternal struggle of liberty against fatality, and the definitive triumph of the brute force of nature over human liberty. It is the myth of Brahma devouring his ankles and the serpent devouring his tail."

Among the numerous faults which Monsieur Huzar modestly admits may be found in his book (which might be called *The Science of the Future* by a man one hundred years before his age), the gravest, in his opinion, is its being totally incomprehensible to the vast majority of his readers. But this, he adds, with increasing confidence, is a defect to be found in all prophecies, which, written in one epoch, are only realised long afterwards. Thus the latter-day prophet describes himself as being quite resigned to not being either understood or believed in this age—certain as he is, that his formulas will, one day, become the creed of the whole world. Who, if the second French empire had been predicted in eighteen hundred and forty-seven, would have believed in the prediction?—the prophetess would have been scouted as a mad woman. When Joan of Arc prophesied the raising of the siege of Orleans, the coronation of the king at Rheims, and the expulsion of the English from France: what difficulty had she to make herself understood? and yet events turned out exactly as she predicted them.

When Christopher Columbus prophesied the New World, the kings, the savans, the practical men of the epoch, looked upon him as a lunatic; he had infinite trouble in order to obtain the means of starting on an expedition which was to enrich Spain, and give a new world to that already known. Thus, Monsieur Huzar tells us, the vulgar will neither understand nor believe when the organic destruction of the world by means of science is announced to them.

When Monsieur Huzar sees a man running about in the vast storehouses of science, carrying with him the lighted torch of investigation, he is mortally terrified and alarmed. For, did not Pliny fall a victim to his curiosity? Was not the learned physician, Reichtmann, who renewed the experiments on the electric kite after Franklin, struck

down dead in his study? Was not Pilâtre de Rosier, one of the successors of Montgolfier, precipitated from his balloon, and dashed to pieces? Did not Dulong lose an arm and an eye in preparing chlorine of azote? When for the first time the solidification of carbonic acid was attempted, did not the apparatus burst, and was not the demonstrator torn into a thousand pieces? Have not chloroform and ether produced numerous accidents? Does not every man know that engineers and stokers can never pursue their infernal callings for more than six years? Does not everybody know, likewise, that aeronauts always fall victims to their temerity after their fortieth or fiftieth ascent? Everybody does not know these facts, though the latter-day prophet does. Some people are foolish enough to imagine that the accidents detailed above have not been by any means the result of exaggerated science, but have occurred because the persons making the experiments did not know enough, instead of knowing too much. Some people would be bold enough to aver that the average mortality among aeronauts, by accident, is not by any means greater than in any other calling of an unusually perilous nature, pursued by a very small body of men. There are many aeronauts now alive who have made their sixty, eighty, one hundred, aerial flights; and our own British aeronaut, Mr. Green, completed, we believe, his five hundredth ascent three or four years since.

This, then, is the end of our march of intellect, our civilisation, our arts and sciences and manufactures, our steam-engines, steam-guns, thrashing and sawing-machines. This is what we have come to with our electric telegraph, our electro-biology, our Royal Institution in Albemarle Street, and our Museum of Economic Geology. Exaggeration of Science! Cataclysm! Collapse! It is all up with everything!

ATTRACTION AND REPULSION.

THE French head of the Arab Bureau, Monsieur Charles Richard, was sitting in his official seat, administering justice in open court, surrounded by more or less friendly chiefs, the leaders of more or less barbarous tribes. Djilali, the accomplished chaouch, had disappeared, to take part in the miraculous affair of the donkeys and the sacks of wheat, which we have already recorded, and the makrezani, or courier, his worthy substitute, introduced to the court a female plaintiff. She was a girl of from eighteen to twenty years, lovely both in face and figure, a charming model of the Arab type in all its purity, with brilliant eyes, alert mien, and clad as simply but also as neatly as a woman of the middle ranks could possibly be.

Unlike the majority of the plaintiffs of the opposite sex, she seemed to have a perfect

comprehension of what she wanted to say, and expressed herself with a clearness and resolution which are rarely met with among Arab women. It was evident that she was under the overpowering influence of some potent and genuine sentiment; in other words, that her soul was illumined with a ray of faith. She began her statement without needing to be questioned.

"I come to you," she said, "because, here, it is only amongst the French that truth and justice are to be found. In vain do they tell us falsehoods and keep us imprisoned within our tents; we behold your works, and judge of you from them."

"Your address, my daughter," replied the president, "prepossesses me with a good opinion of you. Speak without fear, and be assured that whatever can possibly be done in your behalf, shall be done."

"O! I will speak without fear. It is not here that a woman need feel afraid. I never was more calm than I am at this moment."

"Quite right, my child. Of whom do you complain? Has any one acted unjustly towards you?"

"I will tell you all about it, and the exact truth; for you are the only person who can comprehend my situation and at the same time support my rights. My name is Ourida Bent Douni; I am the daughter of Douni Ben, the khabab of the tribe of the Beni Todjar, and I have to complain of my own father, who wants to force me to marry an ugly and infirm old man, named Mammam Belasenan, his neighbour."

"How could your father have conceived so unfortunate an idea! Can he have been seduced by the dowry offered him by Belasenan; and does he want, like too many other fathers, to sacrifice his child to a money-bag?"

"No; the dowry has nothing to do with this business. My father desires to marry Belasenan's daughter, and he will not consent to the match except on the condition that I am to be made over to him in exchange. I have resisted with all my strength; because the man to whom they want to give me, inspires me with disgust and horror, and because I do not feel myself capable of fulfilling with him the duties of a wife. My resistance has brought upon me my father's anger, blows, and ill-treatment of every kind. I was bound with ropes. Only look; you see how my arms still show the marks and bruises of the cord which I broke, or rather which"—here the plaintiff exhibited a charming air of embarrassment—"which some one else broke for me. For, unless I had had that assistance, I know not what would have happened to me."

"Let us see, my child; don't be ashamed to speak out openly. It is right that I should know what this assistance was, although I think that I have guessed it. Since you appear to understand us so well, you ought to

know that we invariably respect and honour every true and natural sentiment, and that we reserve our contempt only for falsehood and hypocrisy. Speak without fear; confide to me all you may have on your mind."

"Yes, I will tell him!" exclaimed the plaintiff, with a natural burst of feeling. "I will tell him; and why not? Ought I to make any concealment from you? Besides, is it not allowable to tell you all—to confide completely in you? It was not I who broke my bonds; I was not strong enough for that; it was Khabib Oulid Galb, a cavalier belonging to your makrezen; a brave cavalier."

"Whom you prefer to Belasenan, don't you?"

"Yes; I love him," answered the plaintiff with resolution. "Why not avow it? And what harm is there in that? I had rather die than belong to any other man than him!"

"Very good, very good, my child. Your frankness and the sincerity of your expressions are the best recommendations in your favour that any one can give you. I promise you, on my word of honour, that satisfaction shall be done you. But let us hear more; explain everything clearly. Did Oulid Galb carry you off?"

"O! it does not cause me the slightest embarrassment to relate to you the whole of our story. We have loved each other for more than a year, ever since the marriage of Ben Tām, where he saw me dance with the women of the tribe, and where I saw him, I myself, manœuvring on horseback with musket and gunpowder better than all the cavaliers of the united gouns. Since that time, being aware of my father's violence, he has often proposed to me to elope with him. I never would. But at last my patience became exhausted; and when I was bound and covered with blows, I sent Bent Soudan, our negress, to inform him of it. He came; he broke the ropes, and then I fled with him; but I swear to you, by the head of the Prophet, that we came directly and straight to you, and that no one can say they met us travelling out of the shortest road."

"I believe your statement. He accompanied you hither; he is therefore here?"

"Yes, assuredly, he is here; but, of course, he did not venture to present himself together with me."

Orders were immediately given for the introduction of Oulid el Galb, who did not keep the court waiting long. He really was a handsome fellow, with a countenance at once mild and energetic. He was clad in a neat, appropriate, and complete horseman's costume. On beholding him, it was not very difficult to comprehend the preference accorded to him by the plaintiff over the infirm and ugly Belasenan. His attitude betrayed a certain degree of uneasiness, which did not appear to arise from natural timidity, but merely from anxiety and fear lest his heart's desires should not be gratified.

"Come forward," said the girl to her lover, "I have told the agha all—he knows everything."

"Glory to Allah!" exclaimed the cavalier, visibly more at his ease. "You did right to tell him all, for I should have found it a hard task myself to do so."

"Attend to what I say," said the president. "With you two I do not expect to be obliged to beat about the bush for half a day." To the cavalier: "Will you marry this woman?"

The cavalier shouted the most decided "Yes!" that ever was heard under similar circumstances.

To the woman: "And you; will you take this man for your husband?"

Ourida sent forth another "Yes!" not more decided, but certainly shriller than the former one.

"After your mutually expressed consent, in the name of Allah, who inspired your love, I unite you as man and wife. Kadi, draw up the act of marriage immediately."

"But, Sidi," remonstrated the hook-nosed kadi, a little out of countenance; "Sidi Krehil, in the Chapter on the Union of the Sexes—"

"I am perfectly aware, my friend," interrupted the president, "of what Sidi Krehil says. According to him, I ought to send back the daughter to her father's custody, that she may be compelled, in spite of her protestations and her bodily and mental grievances, to marry a man old enough to be her grandfather. But do you know what would happen then, if I were insane enough to obey his orders? One of two things: either old Belasenan would be the death of this poor girl, or she would run off with the man she loves, and so cause a great scandal. Is not that as clear as daylight?"

Here a slight murmur of approbation arose in the midst of the assembly, penetrating through the thick stratum of prejudice with which it was overlaid.

"Now, since by following the law which you want to invoke, I must cause either an evil or a crime, and since by violating its prescriptions I obtain nothing but good, is it not better to follow the latter course of conduct?"

"But, Sidi," protested the kadi, evidently put out of sorts by the extreme novelty, to him, of the above reasoning; "it is nevertheless written in the commentaries of Sidi le Khhal, that—"

"Your Sidi le Khhal certainly does not go a step further than Sidi Krehil. Those who make laws and those who write commentaries on them can only say one thing—namely, that the law must be obeyed. But remember this, and mark me all of you, when a law is not in accordance with the human heart it is constantly violated, with whatever punishments it may arm itself to maintain its ascendancy. In laws like yours, which are daily defied—whose violation is attested by

your manners, your songs, and poets, in case you should venture to deny the fact—it is sure to happen that of the law or the heart of man one of the two must yield. It is the law which has given way, and why? Because the law is the work of men, and the human heart is the work of Allah. But I am sadly afraid that you do not quite understand this logic."

"What admirable words! 'tis the spirit of Allah who speaks by your mouth!" shouted the chiefs in chorus, nine-tenths of whom believed that they had been listening to a speech in the Chinese language.

"Well," said the court to the kadi, "does your conscience permit you now to draw up the marriage act in question?"

"By the justice of Allah!" replied the kadi, in a fit of common-sense to which he was occasionally subject; "with all my heart. Nothing but good can come of it."

"Note well, I beg of you, every one who hears me," said the presiding magistrate. "I wish that I could see the Arabs less addicted to lying, theft, and murder, and more frequently marrying the women whom they love."

"Sidi Bou Krari! that is something like a speech!" chorussed the chiefs with radiant smiles, before whose genial influence the last coat of misty prejudice seemed ready to fly off and vanish.

"Yes, certainly," observed Ben Safi, one of the most kind-hearted and intelligent amongst their body; "you are quite right in solemnising this poor girl's marriage. I know her father well; he is an awkward and stiff-necked old curmudgeon, who would sell his child's skin for a silver dourou."

"I have not the slightest doubt of it. And, kadi, as to the act of marriage, there is no need to mention any dowry to be paid to the father; for if he comes to claim it here, you will tell him that the blows bestowed on his daughter have been set down to balance the debt."

The kadi went to work at once, to draw up the blessed document, with all accustomed gravity, importance, forms, and spectacles. The precious paper was then presented to the new-married couple by the chief of the Arab bureau himself, at the great risk of being torn to shreds on the spot by their eagerness to seize possession of it. Glories to Allah, shouts of joy, benedictions without number, streamed from their mouths. At last they took their departure, after having two or three times mistaken their way out, in the delirium of their delight. The public, affected in spite of themselves by the touching scene they had witnessed, in which genuine feeling had been displayed in all the charm of sincerity, appeared decidedly satisfied with the violation of the law which had just been committed before their eyes.

The pleasant impression left by this judicial act was abruptly disturbed by the crier

of the court, who announced that another man and a woman demanded admittance together.

"Admit them," said the magistrate.

"Both of them?" inquired the door-keeper, in perplexity.

"Both of them," was the reply of authority.

The complainants entered. The man, grey-headed, and with obstinacy stamped upon his countenance, regarded his companion with threatening looks. His personal appearance was very neglected. His camel's-hair cord—the fillet tied round the temples to fix the head-dress—had slipped down over his eyebrows. His gestures were violent, and his voice slightly hoarse. The woman was still young, and very active. Her face was agreeable, but full of cunning. Her actions were abrupt, quick, and expressive of great hostility towards the man. Her voice was the sharpest and shrillest in all Algeria. The two plaintiffs, the instant they entered the audience-room, without waiting to be questioned, began to perform a discordant duett, whose course it was quite impossible to check. The tenor voice at first took the leading part.

"I am descended," it bewailed, from Sidi Calhha—Allah have mercy on his soul! I am a marabout, a priest, aristocratic and holy, a pure and respectable man, whose praises you will hear from every mouth. I should be the happiest of mortals, living in prosperity and the public estimation, if I had not an abominable wife, who makes me suffer every imaginable tribulation."

"But," said the court, "if you go on talking both at once, how do you suppose that I can make out what you say? Make your respective statements one at a time."

The irritation of the plaintiffs not permitting them to hear the above observation, and still less to shut their mouths, the conjugal duo recommenced with renovated volubility on either side, the husband's being still the predominant melody.

"It is impossible to give you an idea of her profligacy and of the infamous conduct she every day practises. She robs me; she squanders my property in company with beggarly fellows who happen to win her favour. She covers my tent with shame, and causes every one to turn away from it with horror. Not only does she plunder me and abandon herself to debauchery; she even has the hardihood to lift her hand against me, and to beat me."

"In the name of heaven," cried the President, "speak in your turn! It is easy enough to perceive that you do not agree, but it is quite impossible for me to distinguish the complaints which you wish to make against each other. Do you, woman, hold your tongue for the present; you shall be heard after your husband."

This eloquent address produced an effect,

the very reverse of what was intended; for, instead of the duett being reduced to a simple solo, it took the form of a trio in the correct Italian-operative style. The head of the Arab bureau sang his part in separate phrases after the fashion of bassi-cantanti, such as Herr Formes and Signor Lablache. The words assigned to his music were these: "How can you expect me to understand a word?"—"That is not the way to state your case."—"But, at least, listen to me one single moment."—"Pray, hold your tongues, if only to take breath."—"Remember, you are not in your own tent here."—"You are not allowed to howl at each other in this way in a court of justice!" And so on—*da capo* and bis. The tenor sustained his part with a firm full chest, but this time the lady got the upper-hand, and her clear soprano voice made itself audible above all.

"Can I," she warbled, "a woman esteemed by all the world, of distinguished manners and abilities, can I live any longer with such a wretch, and serve as the victim of his brutality? An infamous fellow, who compromises my reputation, and raises a heap of scandal against me! If he would only let me be a little quiet at home in my tent, gracious Allah! I am so good-natured, that I would willingly make some excuse for him, on account of our relationship; for, after all, I cannot deny that the detestable creature is my cousin—at least, so they tell me; for, to judge from appearances, I should rather take him to be the son of Satan than the son of Sidi Calhha. What an abominable beggar! Only conceive that, the other night, under the pretence that the dinner was badly cooked, he threw at my head the wooden quega on which it stood, the earthenware tadjin full of sauce, in short, whatever he could lay his hands on, to the very wood from off the fire. If a negress had not come to my aid, I should certainly have been a murdered woman. My body still bears the marks of violence; and, if I could only show it you, you would see what a state my back is in. But I am far too highly-educated a woman not to know that decency forbids my displaying that portion of my personal charms."

"Silence!" roared the crier of the court, in a voice of which no human sound can give the slightest idea. The supernatural cry produced its accustomed effect, which is the same as that caused by a stone falling in the midst of an orchestra of frogs.

"Make the woman leave the court," said the president, immediately taking advantage of the momentary silence, "and let the man remain. Retire for an instant, my good woman; I will send for you when I have heard your husband. There is no other means of finishing the case."

Here a scene of despair took place. The fair plaintiff refused to quit, and protested so fiercely as to compromise the windows. The

mekrezeni, as impassible as the law itself, seized her in the vice of his arms, and carried her out of the audience-chamber with a delicate ease which promised future eminence in his profession. This done, he returned with as calm a countenance as if he had just been drinking a glass of water.

"Now speak," said the court to the remaining plaintiff; "but, of all things, be brief!"

"You have seen this woman," said the man, a little out of breath. "By her shouting and her abuse you can judge of her temper. How do you think I can continue to live with such a creature as she is?"

"Well, what prevents your being divorced? Why have you not already repudiated her before now?"

"Justice of Allah! If the business is not yet done, it is not because we have not both of us wished for it. The only point on which we have ever agreed is, that it is impossible for us to live together."

"What obstacle, then, prevented you from accomplishing your mutual wish? Was it the money?"

"The money! By no means; for I am willing to cede her dower to her; and I heartily renounce the portion of it which I have a just right to claim. The money! By the benediction of Sidi Calhha, instead of claiming it, I would rather pay it, in order to be free from such a she-devil. The peace of one's tent can't be purchased too dear."

"But what, in short, can be the obstacle?"

"The relations! Those infernal relations, who came and assailed us on both sides with their arguments about propriety, decorum, and such like nonsense. As if to live in peace with one's wife were not the height itself of propriety, instead of fighting all day long."

"That is a very sensible observation."

"That is the reason why we have come before you, to ask you to do us the favour to divorce us, seeing that in our neighbourhood the thing is rendered impossible by the resistance of our respective families."

"You were quite right in coming to me; for your desires shall be immediately satisfied. Heaven forbid that I should allow you to remain much longer in this wretched state. From misery to crime is but a single step; and that is why our Christian religion imposes on us the sacred duty of succouring all who suffer, no matter what their misfortune may be. You will obtain directly the relief you require. Let the other plaintiff be admitted now."

The woman entered. Her exasperation was a little calmed, but her volubility remained as astounding as ever.

"You have turned me out by main strength," she complained. "Your officer pitched me out at the door as if he had been handling a sack of onions at market. That, however, is of no consequence at all, and I

make no remonstrance about it. But what does annoy me is, that that man (pointing to her husband) has no doubt been telling you all sorts of horrors while I was absent, and unable to refute them. But, whatever he has said is nothing but falsehood, calumny, and infamy. Perhaps he has told you that I did not wish to be divorced! Well, I swear by the tomb of Sidi Calhha, that I had rather go without a husband all the rest of my life, throw myself into the sea, or marry a Jew—saving your presence—than continue to live with him."

"If you will allow me to put in a word, I will tell you news that will please and calm you. In the first place, during your absence you were not the subject of conversation; the only topic was your divorce, which is about to be pronounced immediately."

"Glory to Allah!" cried both the plaintiffs immediately. "May Allah have mercy on all your relations! May Allah prolong your days! May Allah satisfy your desires! May Allah guide you! May Allah direct your judgment! May Allah destroy your enemies! May Allah make you victorious!"

"Thank you! Thank you kindly! Kadi, you have heard the complainants; you are competent to pronounce the divorce."

"Nothing is easier. Sidi Krelil says, in the Chapter on Divorce, that when the parties are agreed, it is a sin not to satisfy them immediately. Sidi Ibrahim even defines the punishment applicable to any kadi who, in such cases, defers the divorce to another day. This punishment is in proportion to the amount of the dowry. Sidi Lekhhah also mentions it, though incidentally, in his Chapter on Plantations. There is also Sidi—"

"No more, I beg of you. Leave the doctors of the law alone, and pronounce the divorce. That is the only question now before us."

"Tis true; you are right." Then he added, in solemn and nasal tones, "Husband and wife, do you consent to a divorce?"

"O, yes, yes!" replied the plaintiffs, with touching unanimity.

"Then," said the kadi, still more solemnly, and with more sonorous trumpetings through his nose, "in the name of the law, you are disunited."

"Glory to Allah! Glory to Allah!" echoed the happy couple with one accord.

"I shall now draw up the act of divorce. You can come for it in the evening."

"That business is settled at last," said the man. "Our relations will be taken a little by surprise. And now, my darling, go wherever the devil drives you; and if I really am the descendant of Sidi Calhha, may Allah put out both your eyes, or rather, perhaps, wither your tongue, as the greater punishment of the two!"

"Stuff!" replied the woman, "I set your curse at defiance. If you are a marabout, I am a marabout; and if you cast my lot, I

can cast yours. Fire can combat fire. If I am a daughter of Sidi Calhha, may Allah wither your members, break your teeth, cut out your tongue, and blind your eyes! Take that, by way of my parting present!"

"You have lost your senses, both of you," interposed the magistrate, shocked at the bitterness of their maledictions. Happily, Allah pays no regard to the madness of men; and, believe me, the evil destiny which you invoke on each other will have no influence whatever. Allah has something else to do than to attend to your angry imprecations, especially when they are so wicked and implacable. Go in peace, but separately, for you were not made for one another. It was not Allah who joined you together."

"Be accursed to your seventh generation!" was the farewell address which the male plaintiff bestowed on his former wife.

"And you to your seven hundredth generation!" was her exasperated rejoinder.

NEMESIS.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS. CHAPTER THE THIRD.

GARSTON regained so absolute a mastery over himself that he guarded successfully against every circumstance that might tend towards the discovery of his crime. I was in great perplexity and sorely distressed. What if I were at once to denounce him as the murderer of Anna? Would the charge gain a better reception with the world because I made it? Would not sympathy for the victim be forgotten in abhorrence of the callous, although public-spirited kinsman? Or, would not some disgrace be directly cast on our family?—unmerited disgrace, it is true—but not the less hard to be borne; as they who measure it out well enough know. What had most weight with me, was the knowledge that the trial and conviction of Garston for the murder of the girl whom she had loved, whom she had protected, and who had fallen a sacrifice the moment that protection was withdrawn—would accelerate and embitter the last moments of my mother. Yet, in proportion to the force of these considerations, a disinclination to shape my course in obedience to their dictates, grew upon me. I began to feel, not a horror only, but a detestation of the man who had set me upon reviewing the chances of acquiescence in crime on the one hand, and of disgrace and misery on the other, and who was to obtain an immunity from punishment by a mental process which, taking place in any other heart but my own, would consign him out of hand to the gibbet.

Looking up, and casting my eyes towards the farther end of the room, I was startled by observing Garston in the door-way. He was undressed, and was beckoning me. I could not but go to him—besides, it was expedient that I should keep my own counsel.

"Silence!" he whispered, "don't let anybody hear us. Come with me into my room."

"Here," he added, when he had got there, "is the key. Open that chest. A thousand thanks. Now, forty drops out of that bottle in half a wine-glass of water. Put it to my mouth. Here, Arthur, you are a kind, good fellow!—a dear fellow. My nerves, you see, are prostrated."

I prevailed upon him to go into bed, and sat down by his side. Already my heart began to melt towards him. "I have gone through such a dreadful night," said he, with clasped hands stretched from the bed, and with eyes of lifeless misery raised to mine—"such a dreadful night, that the like of it cannot again be mine on this side the grave. Other dreadful nights await me, I fear; though none so terrible as that. Yet, what can be more terrible than losing one's senses? I dread that—O! I dread that!"

He paused, still gazing at me with a doubting and yet beseeching expression. "Will you attend me, should that come upon me?" he asked suddenly. "You are going to say, your mother;—not for the world. She is too ill, and it would kill her; and no servants—they believe anything they hear that is horrible; and no doctor,—he can be of no avail in a case like mine. Say you will be my nurse?"

I assented. I could not withdraw the hand he had seized.

"Bless you!—bless you! Keep that mother's heart of yours in your bosom all your life, dear boy! Man that is born of a woman should partake chiefly of the mother's nature; so would humanity, tenderness, and mercy be more prevalent in the world. Do not be surprised or alarmed. Men in delirium say things the farthest in life from their thoughts, feelings, and intentions. I once knew a man in Rome whom I tended during a long illness,—one of the purest and best of human beings. In his aberration, he accused himself of the most shocking crimes. Of course, I did not believe a word he said."

Garston talked a great deal more in the same strain, shocking me at intervals by attempts at mirth, which made me fear an access of the delirium he dreaded; but, after giving him, at his request, a composing draught, I saw him sink into a heavy sleep which promised continuance, and I left him.

I was, I found, late at the breakfast-table. My mother had been waiting for us some time. I felt it necessary to inform her of Garston's illness. She was a little disturbed.

"Arthur, I never saw my husband in such a state as he was last night," she murmured. "He talked and acted strangely, did he not? Did he say what a night he had passed?"

I told some pacifying lie; beginning to hate myself, and the course of duplicity and subterfuge I had now entered upon. She would go to see him after breakfast, on my assuring

her that he was at that moment in a sound sleep. She did so; and, greatly to my astonishment, he acquitted himself in a manner that could beget no suspicion. He spoke with his usual softness and sweetness; but, in a deprecating tone, as if he feared she knew something for which her pardon could not be expected. Thus he succeeded in disguising what was within, whenever she visited him during the few days he kept his chamber. I, alone, who was almost constantly at his side during that time, knew the mighty effort it cost him to put on the appearance of calmness and convalescence which was necessary to allay her solicitude, and thereby to keep the doctor out of his room. In the daytime, not a word could reach his ear from below, but it excited in him the wildest terror; and this passion, more or less at work while light remained, appeared to me to keep his mental faculties entire, though it suspended them. But at night, after the first transient effect of the cordial I administered had passed away—which was one of spasmodic or hysterical mirth—and its intended influence began to operate, then the murder in the summer-house, and the after-burial of the body, would swim back into his soul and come out of him in disjointed and distorted sentences; so that, what I had witnessed was represented to me with a vividness that made me shudder, and sometimes almost impelled me to fly from him.

When he awoke, he would be very pressing with me to tell him whether he had said anything in his sleep; and, if so, what it was,—that we might laugh over the extravagance, as he and his friend at Rome had formerly done! Laugh over it!—he laughed, with that chilly sweat upon him which matted his eyebrows and gummed his hair into thick strings upon his forehead. I repeated some incoherent words; half-finished clauses of a sentence; the whole bearing a very remote relation to the subject of his dream; so remote, indeed, that his fears, however active, could not lead him to suppose that he had betrayed himself. Then he sank back comforted. But once, when taking the hint from a word that had escaped him, I said that he had been talking at random of the sale, and of what had taken place there, he looked greatly surprised, and regarded me with distrust. But presently his doubts were dismissed, "It is so in delirium," he said; "we then speak of things which, awake, never come into our thoughts." Night and morning I prayed in behalf of the poor, lost creature, and my sleep was the better for it. I was fortified against anything that might happen from day to day.

I had enough to do to divide my attention without resorting to my studies; which, from that time, were abandoned. I did indeed read; but in a desultory manner, and books which I might lay aside at a moment's notice. If I could have fixed my attention on any subject demanding an exercise of my faculties,

Garston would have prevented the attempt. My mother now almost entirely kept her room; but, when she and her husband met, an estrangement was evident, which, so far as I could judge, had been tacitly agreed upon. He was as respectful as ever in his manner; but I remarked at a distance and in silence, that he durst not or could not take her hand; yet he watched her every movement with the utmost anxiety. Her presence withdrawn from him, he attached himself to me. He hung about me on all occasions; following me wherever I went, under pretence of gleaning from me some of the fruits of my classical studies. He had neglected, he said, so as almost to have forgotten the Greek and Roman authors; but this was his mere excuse for persecuting me with his continual presence; for, whatever the subject of our conversation, he always contrived, with painful ingenuity, to deviate from it; entering upon shrewd conjectures concerning crime, and its consequences to the criminal in this world. If detected—he grew pale at the suggestion—the criminal must suffer death; but if he escaped detection—might he not yet live to be a happy man? It was a curious subject of inquiry, was it not? I, to whom the unwelcome, the unhappy power had been given of reading the thoughts of the wretched man with something like correctness, could perceive that, unaccustomed to seek consolation in the Scriptures, he had been recently looking into them, not with a view to his soul's welfare; but for examples of God's forbearance towards sinners. He denied that the punishment of Heaven ever fell upon guilt in this world; contending that the rashness, over-security, or imprudence of men brought them to an end which, to the superficial, seemed like the effect of a judgment; but when I cited instances of men convicted of crime by some chance which not the sagacity of Satan could have foreseen, he turned away hurriedly, ordered his horse, and was not seen again for hours. I cannot yet quite understand the fascination which drew him so constantly to a subject over which he would hover with a morbid persistence that might have been dangerous in any company but mine.

One morning, a week after that memorable night, my mother desired to see me in her own room. Garston, who was present when I was summoned, changed countenance. He dreaded all private talk on the part of others; even the sudden and hasty entrance of a servant into the room discomposed him. I obeyed, and left him. I found my mother greatly agitated. She bade me sit by her side.

"Arthur," she said, "I want your advice. You are growing quite a young man, my love. You see: I sent Anna away from me for reasons which I need not mention; but I wish you to believe they were sufficient

reasons. She was to have gone to London—was to have gone, I say! But you shall hear. I supplied her with money, and gave her a letter to our good Mrs. Marshall, my nurse and yours, with directions to see to her present comfort, and to arrange with a lady, a friend of mine, how the girl could be best sent back to her own country, to which she was desirous to return. Her boxes were to be forwarded to her on the receipt of a letter from Mrs. Marshall, telling me of Anna's safe arrival. Not having received such a letter, I became alarmed; and, three days ago I wrote, stating all these circumstances, and begging an instant reply. Here is Mrs. Marshall's answer to that letter, received this morning. Read it. What am I to do?"

The substance of that letter the reader will at once guess. Mrs. Marshall had seen and heard nothing of Anna. I returned the letter, saying,—

"I do not know how to advise in this matter. It is very extraordinary, but let us hope—"

"Hope!" interrupted my mother; "I have but a choice of fears—fears which have clung to me, and never left me, since the day the girl went from us. You remember how frightened I was on that night; the violence of the wind; Mr. Garston coming home so ill, too—how could I but be alarmed? I was so shocking a coward, Arthur," she added, with an attempt at a smile, "that, when I got to bed, I lay for hours shaking with terror, and I fancied I heard noises in the house. I was so terrified that I got up, put on my dressing-gown, and came to the door of your bedroom. Yes; and I opened it, and called 'Arthur! Arthur!' but you were in so sound a sleep that I did not like to disturb you. I felt ashamed of myself, and so I went back again."

My heart leapt to my mouth at hearing this; but the dear pathetic face of my mother moved me beyond expression. I kissed her tenderly, and she laid her head on my heart and wept; nor could I forbear tears. I fancied I knew what was then uppermost in her mind.

"Arthur, we will go before long to the grave of your father," she said at length; "I wish to pray there; and you will join your prayers to mine, will you not?"

I pressed her hand.

"But what is to be done about Anna?" she asked, recollecting herself. "I was very foolish. Not liking her to take the coach in the town, for fear she should meet Mr. Garston on his return from the sale—for I did not wish him to see her—I directed her to go to Turton by the way of the vale, and meet the coach there."

I knew not how to respond to this.

My mother obtained a promise from me to go upon an errand she was very anxious I should perform. She little knew that my

time and trouble were not to be put into execution to do it. She wished me to seek out the coachman, and ascertain whether the girl had really taken a place by his conveyance, and gone all the way to London.

"You may tell all this to Mr. Garston, if you like," said my mother, when I was about to leave her.

"Not if you prefer that I should be silent."

"It will, I think, be best."

It was in no equable frame of mind that I quitted my mother's chamber. What misery had this ruthless man brought upon our house! And I, compelled neither by honour, nor conscience, nor will; but by an exacting, inexorable necessity, to play the accomplice, and to shield him from infamy and an ignominious death! With a lowering brow, I rejoined Garston in the parlour. It was manifest that he had been awaiting my appearance with fearful impatience.

"Your mother has detained you some time," he said, with the best air he could assume. "Some family matters?"

"She has been making me a very alarming communication," I replied significantly.

"An alarming communication! what—what communication?"

His eye involuntarily glanced towards the hill, the summit of which was visible from the back window. What I had to relate considerably reassured him.

"It is very strange—extremely strange—there is no accounting for it," and he walked to the window.

After a few minutes, he turned quickly, and came towards me. His eye brightened with satisfaction at what he would have had me believe was the idea that had suddenly been presented to his mind:

"It has just struck me, Arthur," said he, in a confidential tone, "and I am sure you will agree with me (and if so, it may be as well that our joint belief should be stated to your mother) it strikes me that the girl has thrown herself into the river, and been drowned."

"In which case, Mr. Garston, her body would have been picked up."

"That by no means follows. There were none to see her do the act, and consequently no search has been made. At high tide she would have been carried over the bar, and thence away—away—her body, not having been washed on shore at Norland or at the Isle of Lundy, is now in the Atlantic. She will never be seen nor heard of more."

"And do you think this likely?" I asked. "What could incite Anna to an act of self-destruction? My mother loved the girl. There seems, indeed, to have been a slight disagreement between them—slight, because all the measures taken by mother were evidently dictated by a solicitude for her welfare. The supposition that Anna had destroyed herself would go nigh to break her heart."

"It would—it would!" cried Garston, eagerly; "and therefore you must not attempt to persuade her of that. You must not, for the world. How came I to think of it? I am a fool! The girl is now in London, and we shall probably hear of her in a few days. Don't you perceive how likely that is? Fix that in your mother's mind."

I shook my head. "What if I know that she did not go by the coach?"

"Ha!—there again: I had forgot. Say that she did: anything to quiet your dear mother's fears. This girl has been the cause of much wretchedness to us both. Would to Heaven that, wherever she be, she would now appear, that we might know the truth!"

It was in agony, which strained his frame and wrung the muscles of his face, that Garston uttered this monstrous wish. His fears instantly revenged themselves upon him. He dropped into a chair.

"Your mother's state distresses me greatly," he stammered: "I cannot endure this constant anxiety about her."

About a fortnight after this, a serious change for the worse was perceptible in my mother. She was greatly alarmed and concerned when she heard from me that the coachman had taken up no such passenger as Anna, and I perceived that she drew conclusions from that intelligence; although, what they were, she did not make known to me. But, when she learned from the servants that Garston was now in the constant habit of walking and riding for several hours, and that he sometimes did not return home till a late hour, it was not difficult to me to divine the suspicions which excited her indignation against Garston. She often spoke with mournful pity of Anna; although in a very guarded way; but, being a poor actress of dissimulation, she sometimes betrayed what was passing in her mind. She referred to her more than once as "that poor lost creature!" There was no help for it. I could extend none. The terrible truth was sealed up within me. Garston must bear the opprobrium my mother's words cast upon him. It was the lightest penalty he could pay.

The condition of Garston at this time was most pitiable. He had seen my mother lifted into her carriage when I had accompanied her to visit my father's grave. I detected him watching us with an ashy face over the wall of the churchyard, as we knelt at that sacred spot. He knew that she was about to die, and waylaid the doctor on every visit, conjuring him to save her, and offering him the half, the whole of his fortune if he would engage to do so. Insanity seemed to be growing within him. The opposition of two very different feelings was rending his brain. He would not lose his Harriet—for the world he must not lose her. Affection made him desire from his whole heart that she should be spared to him; yet fear lest his

crime should be discovered, made him wish that she should die; for I, who read him with minute anxiety, am assured that he dreaded the effect of such a discovery upon her more than he dreaded its consequences to himself.

Meredith had been sent for by my mother in the double capacity of friend and legal adviser. His interviews with her were protracted; and, when he came down and joined us in the parlour, his demeanour to Garston was of the most freezing coldness. Garston, on his part, knew not how to carry himself in the presence of the lawyer. I am not aware that he had ever much liked Meredith; but he highly respected him; and even now, perhaps, his heart acknowledged that the old gentleman's repelling manner arose from a feeling which demanded his respect. But he feared him, and availed himself of any decent pretext to leave the room almost as soon as the other entered it. He had just done so on the day Meredith spoke to me as follows:

"Arthur, I am about to talk to you like a man of business. I shall not therefore repeat that I never liked this Mr. Garston; for it is nothing to the purpose. You are growing to be a young man, and I feel I can talk to you about a matter which it is, in fact, necessary that you should hear, for your interests are somewhat concerned in it. It is a most important point with your dying mother whether she shall execute a fresh will or not, and I'll tell you why. Your mother had a maid—an Italian girl. You knew her? Very well. Your mother long had her suspicions of this Anna—was jealous of her, in short. One day, when Mr. Garston was absent—about a month ago—the girl was brought to confess her own folly and Garston's baseness."

"I guessed as much," I said.

"Precocious!"

"Yes, and my mother has told me the rest."

"Very good. Now, we want to know what has become of the girl. Your mother has taken it into her head, and not without good grounds, that her departure was an understood thing between Garston and herself. She suspects that the girl is hidden somewhere in the neighbourhood. That can hardly be. I cannot understand it. Has the girl made away with herself?"

"That, Mr. Garston suggested," I remarked.

My speech had an opposite effect to that I had intended.

"Ay! He did, did he?" said Meredith, hastily. "Did he dwell much upon it? Did he press that probability?"

"He abandoned it almost immediately, and entreated me not to whisper a syllable of the kind to my mother, lest it might distress her."

"Very proper, that. I ask his pardon. Now, Arthur, listen to me. I must do this man justice. From what your mother tells

me, I am assured he has been one of the best of husbands to her. Still, I know from a gentleman who attended the sale, that Mr. Garston was not present at it; and, on that morning, he had in his shirt an antique cameo-sort of thing, which your mother remarked was not there on his return."

"Perhaps in the scuffle—" I began.

"I have heard of that. Why this trepidation, Arthur? It is not your interest to take his part, I can tell you. Scuffle! there was no scuffle at the sale, I told you just now he was not at it. The end, then, is this. Garston must submit to be put to the question. I shall call to-morrow morning. On his answers much will depend. Prepare him for what is to come. Your mother shrinks from it; but it must be. He is a gentleman, at least, and knows the obligation of an oath."

With this Meredith left me. I hated myself for the part I had to play; of which I knew not the gradations, much less the end. I did not prepare Garston for the coming interview: my wretched business being to preserve him against the detection of a crime in conjunction with the girl, of far greater magnitude than that with which suspicion charged him.

Accordingly, when next morning Meredith entered the room and summoned him to the bedside of his wife, his consternation was so obvious, that Meredith turned to me with a meaning glance. He rallied, however, and rose to obey the summons, earnestly begging that I might be permitted to accompany him.

"My wish, too," said Meredith. "Arthur's testimony, if not absolutely necessary, is highly desirable in this instance."

Garston shrank at the word testimony. Meredith went on:

"But—for a reason which, after this painful scene is over, Arthur will understand—it will be as well that his mother should not see him. He can stand concealed behind the curtains of the bed."

We went on our way, Garston clinging to me. The clergyman had left my mother's room, and bowed courteously, but very gravely, as he passed us in the passage. My companion pressed my arm, and turned a piteous look upon me. We entered: I snatched a momentary sight of my dear mother's face, and stepped behind the curtain out of view, where I wept unheard.

The sacredness of the room fell upon Garston. He knelt down by the side of his wife, took her hand, and kissed it. Meredith stood at the head of the bed. He was affected; but his misty eyes were bent on the kneeling man.

"Compose yourself, Philip," said my mother, gently and calmly. "I sent for you that I might say what may distress you to hear. I grieve for it; but I would wish your death-bed to be as tranquil as mine. I hope—O! I do trust—that what I have done and am about to say will not be deemed wrong. Anna——"

"Well?"

A faint blush passed over my mother's countenance. She hesitated.

"Let me speak, my dear lady," interposed Meredith. "A word or two will suffice. You must not agitate yourself. Mr. Garston, are you prepared, on the word of a gentleman solemnly to assert that you have held no correspondence whatever with Anna since she left your wife's house?"

"I am prepared to assert—and, if necessary, to swear," replied Garston, not looking up, but with an equal voice—"that I have not exchanged word, by letter or otherwise, with Anna since the day she left this house."

"And, also—" began Meredith.

"Enough," said my mother. "Dear Philip, I believe that you have spoken the truth. For your sake, and for that of the poor girl, I thank God that this doubt has been removed from my mind. I forgive you, as I was prepared to forgive you, after Anna confessed to me—"

"Confessed to you!" almost shrieked Garston, "and she confessed, and you had forgiven! Why—why am I here—kneeling here; a villain, a monster, unfit to live. Hear now, hear, all of you! Arthur, come forward, and hear—"

I was instantly by his side. Seizing him, I lifted him to his feet and dragged him to the door, and thence urged him, with less violence, to his own room.

"You were agitating my mother beyond endurance," I said, placing him in a chair.

"What?" He looked bewildered. "Arthur, you are my good angel. How can I recompense you for all you have done, and suffered for me? Stay with me, dear fellow!"

After a time, Meredith knocked at the door and came in. The kindly eye lighted upon Garston.

"But for you, Garston," he said, with familiarity, "this had not been. You have repudiated the girl, denied all knowledge of her; but she is still a source of vexation and misery. Your mother now blames herself, Arthur, for having dismissed her so summarily, or for not having seen better to her safety. She now wishes to add a codicil to her will, making a provision for her; but that I tell her—"

"Is unnecessary," said Garston. "That were my duty, if—"

"If what?"

"She should ever need it. But why—why should the dear saint be troubled in her last hours by thoughts of the girl? I have sinned, and am forgiven. Let her go."

"And I am to tell this to your wife, sir?" observed Meredith, with severe displeasure.

"Let her go! let her go!" repeated Garston; then, rising, added in a low tone to me, "And bid *him* go. I do not like him. He is no friend of mine."

Meredith must have overheard these words. He withdrew immediately.

From this hour until my mother's death Garston was constantly by her bedside. I, too, was often there; and sometimes heard words pass between them that assured me their married life might have been one of tranquil happiness. During this anxious time, I believe, he had little room in his mind for thoughts of his crime. He lived in the far past and in the present. He was forgiven—it was enough.

He showed so little emotion when Meredith first saw him after my mother's death, that the worthy lawyer was disgusted. Garston was writing when he entered the room; but looked up at him, and then pursued his occupation. Meredith drew me aside.

"Your mother has left him far too much," said he, "but it is not my fault. I did my best to hinder it. I hope he will be satisfied. And so he talks of going to London soon after the funeral? We shall yet hear of that girl." Then, addressing him, with some impatience, he said, "Mr. Garston! my many engagements hardly brook attendance on your leisure. A few words. It was the express wish of your late wife that she should be buried with her first husband."

"I know it, sir," replied Garston; "that wish was expressed to me; a wish of many years. And why should she not lie by the side of that honourable gentlemen?"

"I thought you might object—" began Meredith.

Garston rose with spirit and dignity. "You thought nothing of the kind. Your meaning may be good; but your manners are inexcusable. You are blunt; and, like other blunt instruments, you hack and you hew, and you mangle, and so become more blunt. One word: I know the contents of the will; so we need not enter on that business. Here is my solicitor's address," handing him a paper. "Good morning!"

The choleric Welshman reddened, but said nothing, and retired. He never forgot that interview.

"Did I not talk of going to London?" said Garston to me one evening. Some days had elapsed since the funeral. "That walk of ours to-day has set my spirits in motion, and my body shall keep pace with them. I'm off to-morrow. Four weeks in London, and thence to Italy."

That "walk of ours to-day," had been taken at his wish. Over the gate, along the lane, into the vale, up the hill—the very travel of that fatal night! We stood before the decayed summer-house. Dead leaves thickly strewed the ground. Nothing was to be seen of that spot. We stood above it, however.

"A fine view," he said, and he shuddered.

"Yes. Is it not very cold?"

"It is. A deserted place, this. How came we here? No one would think of voluntarily bending his steps this way. It must be the very caprice of chance that would lead a man here."

He was satisfied that he would leave all behind secure. We walked slowly home.

"Before I leave you to-night, Arthur," resumed Garston, after I had brought myself to utter a few words deprecating so sudden a departure, "I wish to tell you something—a secret. I was not at the sale on the day I left the house for that supposed purpose. I dreaded Anna. She had often threatened to confess to your mother—you comprehend me?—and she had terrified me. She saw this, and had me at advantage. I had reason to suppose she would put her threat in execution that morning. I lingered about the grounds irresolute; almost distracted. To my surprise she came out of the house and entered the lane; the walk we took this morning. I followed and overtook her in the vale. She did not say where she was going; but reproached me; renewed her threats (little did I think she had already confessed), and promised secrecy on one condition. And what was that, do you imagine? That I would then and there solemnly promise to marry her, to make her my second wife. O monstrous! Think well of me Arthur; I conjure you still to think well of me. A violent exchange of words took place: she was insolent, vehement, and—"

Garston paused, and suddenly turned frightfully pale. "Come, come," said he, with a smile that made my blood run cold to look upon. "It came to nothing. She insolent, vehement, and—I left her. What has become of her—what matter?"

Garston rose abruptly when he had said these words, and quitted the room. I saw him no more that night.

It was well, I believed at the time, that he had gone no further with his story. His manner had been so strange since the death of my mother, quite unlike what it had been the month preceding that event—that I was ever fearing self-destruction. I was in constant terror about him. Yet, whither he went, or what became of him, what matter? as he had said of poor Anna. I should be released from my charge; a charge which I know not whether I must not call self-imposed. I wished him gone, and prayed from my heart that I might never see him more.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

AFTER Garston left Westwood House, I was confined to my bed by a low fever for several weeks. The privilege restored to me of independent thought, having such material to feed upon as the past few weeks had supplied, was more than I could exercise, and I well nigh broke down under it. Garston removed from me, no longer requiring my care or taxing my forbearance, my mind was at leisure to go over minutely the dreadful circumstance to which I had made myself a party.

I removed, as soon as I could bear the fatigue

of a fifty miles' journey, to Mr. Oatway's house at Exeter; where all that the most tender anxiety for my health and peace of mind could suggest was put into operation by his daughter Clara; whom in her infancy and girlhood I had regarded as a sister; but who more recently I had hoped would one day consent to become my wife. Here I remained nearly a twelvemonth. But, in proportion as my bodily health improved, my mental malady increased. Mr. Oatway concluded that my mother's death was the cause of the depression that weighed me down; but when he found that neither time nor the influences of religion availed to assuage the anguish and bitterness of my spirit, he was sometimes betrayed into impatient surprise.

At Cambridge, where I went, I was accounted a strangely miserable man. Few sought my acquaintance, and fewer still were tempted to cultivate it. Neither did I distinguish myself. I was a diligent student indeed, but not of books that lead to the acquisition of university honours. I gave my Alma Mater no reason to be proud of me.

Shortly after my departure from Westwood House for Exeter, I had received a letter from Garston, who was then in Italy. There were two pieces of intelligence contained in it that affected and agitated me. He informed me that he had given instructions to his solicitor to cause the property my mother had left him to be turned into money, and to pay it over to me so soon as I came of age. "For," he continued, "I do not wish Mr. Meredith to have any part in this affair. He insulted me once or twice very coarsely during your mother's last illness, and I do not value the man highly enough to wish to regain any good opinion he may once have entertained of me, and which I never justly forfeited." He then told me that he had commissioned an artist, just risen into fame, being second only to Canova among Italian sculptors, to execute a tablet in memory of my mother, which he desired should be placed in the church of Battenham. "This memorial will be all that a fervid poetical genius, chastened by religion, can make it," he wrote.

About a year afterwards, Meredith and I were standing before this tablet in the hall of Westwood House. It had just arrived from Italy. With no ample space for the exercise of taste or the exhibition of genius, the sculptor had displayed both with uncommon skill and effect. We admired the composition: Meredith as truly as I, although grudgingly; and he was greatly pleased, and a little surprised, when I observed that it was not my intention to have it placed in the church.

"I thought you had taken a fancy to the man," he remarked; "you were so constantly with him."

"And I have found my account in it," said I.

"How so?"

I could not resist telling him of Garston's gift, which he most undoubtedly considered as an act of noble generosity. The lawyer was lost in thought for several minutes.

"That Garston loved your mother most deeply and sincerely (there was a dash of adoration in his love, by the bye, most unusual) I firmly believe. I took care to assure myself of that. But— In short, the man is crazy: he looked and acted like a man whose wits are leaving him. This is some impulse. He will think twice about it, and the two thoughts will twine into one humbug. I shall be curious to see your banker's book a year-and-a-half hence."

Two years and a half passed away, and had Meredith inspected that book, he would have seen no such sum as he sought for entered to my credit.

I was not greatly surprised at this. If Garston's gift had not been duly appreciated by me at the time, the withholding of it when I was older, and came to feel the potency of those artificial needs which men create for themselves, was no cause of astonishment to me. I had heard, during my late visit to London, that he played deeply; and that, ever since my mother's death, he had been pursuing a reckless and extravagant course; that his elder brother was dead, and that he expected, from month to month, to succeed to his uncle's peerage. My informant—one of his earliest and most intimate friends—deplored the vices to which he had abandoned himself, saying that his early life gave promise of worthier things, which after-years had fulfilled.

"Your mother," he added, "was exactly suited to him; and I believe she never had occasion to pull the check-string, which, in her case, would have been a silken one. A love of dissipation is no part of his natural character. We all have great hopes from a second marriage, which, between ourselves, he meditates. We think it may reclaim him. He thinks it may."

Two years afterwards, I was again in London for the season, on my return from my wedding tour. Clara Oatway had become my wife. One evening I was at Drury Lane Theatre. The play was over; the applause had ceased, and the audience were subsiding into their seats, when I was tapped on the shoulder. Turning round, I beheld Garston.

"Arthur, a word or two with you," said he, "if the little man's spell be not yet upon you." (The elder Kean had been playing *Overreach*.) "Are you alone?"

I explained that my wife was dining with an old friend of my mother, and that I was going to join her; congratulating him on his accession to a title. He was now Lord Walford.

"It came too late," he said, "and therefore had no charm for me. What it brought with it was, however, welcome; not the

least so, because I can now soon redeem a promise I made you. Not a word; that must be. The tablet.—Has it yet been placed in the church?"

"It has not."

He looked displeased—the first time he had ever so looked to me.

"May I ask the reason?"

"The reason I could offer would not satisfy you."

"Of course, a boyish one. We will talk definitely about it when I see you in Devonshire."

"You are going there, then?"

"And uninvited by you? Yes, in the autumn. You have not yet seen Mrs. Heseldine, and her niece, Miss Mansell?"

"I have not."

"True. Mrs. Heseldine has bought the hall in the vale. You will be near neighbours. She may amuse you. She has picked up a great deal in the world; and, prizing it, always carries it about with her. Some may doubt whether it is worth the carriage."

"And her niece?" I asked, my curiosity a little excited.

"Is one to increase that doubt. When you get back to Westwood House, look at the portrait of your mother—the early one, by Jackson. Alice Mansell's likeness to it is, believe me, remarkable."

After some further talk, he left me.

There was something in Garston's general bearing, and in the tone of his voice, that grated upon me. He was not happy; but he did not despair of happiness. On the contrary, he was devising means to attain it. Time had wrought in him a conviction that his sin would never stand revealed to the eyes of men. He knew not that there was already one who, at a word, could give him up to infamy and death. I never before was so appalled at contemplating the power that had been placed in my hands. To make use of it while my mother lived was out of the question. Since her death, it would have appeared vindictive. It would have displayed an ostentation of a love of abstract justice that would have brought the contempt, even of good men, upon me. But now? Here was an amiable and gentle girl—a counterpart of my mother in her youth; who by that resemblance of person and, it might be, of mind and manner, had engaged Garston's sympathies, and perhaps inspired his love? I almost wonder that this circumstance had not softened my heart towards him; but he had sharpened recollections that often visited me in sleep, and sometimes haunted me by day. I became greatly interested about Miss Mansell. He must not marry her.

In due time my wife and I were settled at Westwood House. Mrs. Heseldine had entered upon possession of the Hall, and was resolved to celebrate that event by gaieties to which all the neighbouring gentry were invited. I found that Lord Walford's com-

pendious description of her was accurate. She was a slave to the usages of what her class call "the world," and a servile retailer of the opinions and sentiments by which those usages are maintained.

Mrs. Heseldine took a liking to my wife and me. We were young, recently married; and with ductile minds, as she believed, that might easily be made to receive impressions which would fit us for "society." I encouraged this friendly feeling to the extent of assuring her that her labour of love was not likely to be thrown away. I was the more readily induced to this, from perceiving that my wife and Miss Mansell had become greatly attached to each other. Nor was it long before I put in my claim to a share of the girl's good opinion. Her likeness to my mother was remarkable; but the softness of her manners; her gentleness and pensiveness, touched my feelings, and made me the more strongly opposed to the contemplated marriage.

This event was soon to take place. Miss Mansell had imparted the expectation to my wife.

"That my niece has been thought worthy to replace your estimable mother," said Mrs. Heseldine to me, "is an honour she may well be proud of; although, perhaps, she deserves it."

I forbore offering such felicitations as I could perceive Mrs. Heseldine expected. I ought to have known that any attempt to break off the match by hints and innuendoes would be a ridiculous waste of time; yet I persisted in them. They came with a bad grace from me, because of my former connection with the subject of them. Mrs. Heseldine listened to me with impatience, perhaps with contempt.

"Has Lord Walford ever injured you?" she asked, the last time we ever spoke of him.

I was silent.

"Your looks say that he has. If so, he has injured himself more than you; for I am sure he would not willingly injure anybody. You are seeking to injure him, but you harm yourself the most. I really have no patience with you."

I was about to say something. She interrupted me.

"For shame!" she resumed. "Lord Walford has always spoken of you with the utmost respect and affection. I can only wonder at it."

When we have done for the best, and in vain, we may sometimes feel ashamed of our interference for a good end. I felt so in this instance, but feigned to be deeply offended with Mrs. Heseldine; and, much to my wife's concern, forbade further visits to the Hall. The marriage must take its course. I had only to pray that it might be well with the poor girl. My wife began to fear that there was something between Lord Walford and me that I durst not divulge. Meanwhile, the

preparations for the approaching marriage went on.

On the evening preceding the marriage, I was seated alone in the drawing-room, my wife having retired early to rest. Lord Walford was announced. He was discomposed, but sat down and regarded me in silence for some minutes.

"Arthur," he said at length, "I little thought that I should ever have cause to utter words of reproach to the son of Harriet Westwood. I must remember that it is her son to whom I speak. You have sought to wrong me. A wrong from you was the last thing I had expected, next to your manner of inflicting it."

"You have heard, then?" I began.

"I have heard all this evening. I had hoped that Alice and I would see you and your wife at our marriage. Your conduct has been mean and dishonourable. What have I done, that you should treat me thus?"

"What have you done?" I replied, greatly excited. "Garston, you ask me this?" I hesitated. "I would have prevented your marriage by every means in my power. For worlds I would not see you the husband of that pure and innocent creature."

"One as pure and innocent was once my wife."

"She was; but she is gone. Forget her. Do you think that any memorial of her should exist, raised by your hand?"

He stared at me. My vehemence was strange to him. He shook his head, and waved his hand.

I went on.

"The girl—Anna, left our house one day. You came home late that night, agitated. We parted at your chamber door. You slept not that night. There was one likewise who did not sleep. You left your room. You left the house. He followed. Along the lane—into the vale—the digging of the grave—the body of Anna—the interment—all! He saw it all! I saw it all!"

True it is that there was horror on Garston's face when these words were shaken from me. But this was almost at once displaced by astonishment,—simple astonishment,—and then gratitude. He sank upon his knees, and clasped his hands towards heaven.

"I thank Thee! I thank Thee!" he exclaimed. "I have sinned! Thou hast made my penitence chastise me. Thy mercy endureth for ever. I am saved!"

His head was bowed down to the floor. He wept and sobbed unrestrainedly.

I stood aloof, unable to speak. I was not prepared for this. It was more frightful to me than what I had anticipated. He arose at length, and came towards me.

"And you knew this. Yet you trusted me, you nursed me, like a brother or a son. You took my hand; you spoke kindly to me; you consoled me. You saved me from myself.

Surely you see the hand of God in this! He would not suffer me to perish. You were his chosen instrument to preserve me. Do not speak. Let me go on. You saw it all. But the all that goes on here—in this bosom; ever being restored; ever beginning anew. You know not the provocation; the violence—that was nothing—the taunts, which did not spare even your mother. I knew not what I did; I who never before lifted my hand to a human being, struck her on the temple, and she fell dead. When I fled away on that night from her face that, in the glimmering moonlight, seemed to move!"

He sank into a chair breathless, and covered his face with his hands. I entreated him to be composed.

"O! that I had told all sooner, whatever had befallen! I hesitated, and the occasion was lost."

What—if anything—was now to be done? Garston guessed the tenor of my thoughts, for he exclaimed, suddenly:—

"Arthur, you would not—no, you could not, take from me my sole chance of happiness in this world, and of salvation in the next? I love Alice Mansell because she is like your mother, and will sustain me in the else desolate future. Your dear mother speaks in her, and through her."

Could I resist this, and more, much more of still more earnest pleading? I could not. He did not exact it; but I swore that never should the secret between us pass my lips. And I bade him begone in peace.

I did not know whether I had acted rightly or wrongly. That was soon shown to me. It is so: His ways are not our ways!

The marriage ceremony was over. I walked to Battenham, to call upon Meredith who—uninvited, as I knew, to take part in the festivities at the hall—would most likely be found at home. But he was out,—he had been summoned, the clerk told me, on urgent business.

There was something in the man's look that excited my curiosity.

"I was bidden to tell nobody—nobody for the present, Mr. Westwood," he said, reading my thoughts.

I turned away, and began to retrace my steps. I had reached the middle of the bridge, when—

A scene had been enacting at the Hall, whilst I was resting in Meredith's office, and talking to his clerk. Meredith appeared amongst the gay assemblage, wishing to see Lord Walford on particular business. His lordship stepped forward.

"You are welcome, Meredith. On a day like this, I at least should forget. Let us shake hands. But you look grave. What is it? Is Arthur ill?"

He led the way to a private room, Meredith following with slow steps and a heavy heart.

"Now—what is it?"

"It is most painful, my lord. I come here as a magistrate, and I come attended."

"What do you mean? Some London thieves among us? They come far to little purpose, when so vigilant a justice as Mr. Meredith has his eyes upon them."

"Not so. I have to speak of a crime not discovered by me. A temporary orchestra was being erected in Mrs. Heseldine's grounds for the marriage festivities."

"I was not aware of it. Well?"

"To complete it, there was a necessity of taking down a ruinous summer-house."

Walford started, and turned death-like.

"A summer-house on the hill. While making the foundation of the new building, the body of a young woman was discovered."

"When?"

"Last night."

"What is this to me?" exclaimed Walford, retreating several paces. Had he rehearsed this scene many times before, that coming upon him now so suddenly it did not kill him?

"An antique brooch—your property—was found clenched in the woman's hand."

"You had no clue to this," Walford cried; "Arthur Westwood has told all, and betrayed me. My blood is upon his head!"

He ran out of the room, rushed through the assembled guests, sprang upon one of the many horses at the hall-door, and was gone.

I had reached, as I have said, the middle of the bridge, when I saw a horseman at full speed making towards me. As he approached and caught sight of me, he checked the horse suddenly, and with great violence; flung the reins from him; raised himself in the stirrups, and cried in two wild shrieks:

"Perjured! perjured!"

The horse sprang forward on to the footway of the bridge, and was over in a moment. I looked over the side. Walford had sunk. He had struck his head against one of the buttresses.

His body was found two days afterwards. It was washed on shore at Norland.

MADAME FRESHON'S.

In the foggy, grey dawn of a January morning, some dozen years ago, I, then a mite of a girl aged thirteen, was left on the deck of the City of Glasgow steamer, lying below London Bridge, for the purpose of transportation to school on the other side of the channel. It was bitter cold, and my Cousin Jack, who had come with me in a cab from Islington, had given me a bashful kiss and gone home again; assuring me that I should be quite safe and that nobody would touch me; but that as it did not appear clear when we should get off, it was not of any use for him to wait to see me start. I was not sorry when he disappeared in the fog, for Cousin Jack always laughed at me, and made me feel shy; because though he was a great, lumbering,

awkward fellow, he was clever and made fun of everybody—even of Uncle Sampson and Aunt Martha, who were good people.

When he was quite gone, I deposited myself on a bench with my feet a good quarter of a yard from the deck, and sat holding my little cloak very tight, while my little nose grew ominously red with stoically repressed tears. Beyond the vessel it was impossible to see five yards in any direction, so that I was free to fancy all sorts of dangers assailing me on my perch. The first came in the shape of a man with a mop and pail to wash the deck, who invited me to go below, which I declined doing on the plea that I preferred to remain where I was: this assertion of my new-born independence helped me to swallow down my rising tears, and to look my position in the face. The position, aforesaid, was, for the present, a damp one, but I endured it with equanimity, and, having tucked my feet further out of the way, I speculated on the probability of seeing home again; so dense a wall of mist was built up between me and the shore. It seemed almost a life-time ago since I had choked over my cup of coffee, and Aunt Martha, in her night-cap, had patted me on the back, in the little parlour, at Islington, to help it down. My philosophy could not have been steady much longer under these sorrowful reminiscences, when fortunately there came diversion for my thoughts in the shape of a large Newfoundland dog. A noble fellow he was;—tall, and with a feathery, black tail, and curls all over him, and beautiful, beseeching, brown eyes, full of intelligence and generosity. He first paid his respects to the man with the mop, and then trotted up to me in a friendly and cordial manner which opened my heart to him at once. I asked him what his name was; an inquiry which he perceived as an overture towards a more intimate acquaintance, and which he answered by sniffing at my little basket, wherein lay a parcel of delicate sandwiches, intended to sustain me during the voyage. He rose majestically, planted one paw on my lap and flourished his majestic tail, which I thought so nice of him that I instantly opened my store, intending to regale him with one of those dainty parallelograms of bread and ham, as a reward for his pretty behaviour.

I suppose his appetite must have been keen that morning, for I am sure he was an honest dog; but somehow, in his haste to thank me, he knocked the parcel out of my hand upon the wet deck, and while I said, pathetically, "O! naughty dog! how could you do so?" he quietly munched up every sandwich, and then deliberately asked for more. I showed him the empty paper and shook my head, and suffered him to put his nose into the basket, whence he withdrew it with a plaintive expression of disappointment and regret, in which it was impossible not to sympathise. He then sat down beside me and listened, while I drew

a touching picture of the extremities to which I might possibly be reduced by his conduct ; "I may even have to eat my boots," I was saying, when a loud laugh close behind me, which the wren at the top of St. Paul's might have heard, caused me nearly to tumble off my perch. It was the captain, into whose care Cousin Jack had consigned me ; a great rubicund man, and the master of the thief. The paper, rolled up into a bâton, with which I was mildly enforcing my argument on the dog's mind, told the story of my loss.

"Never mind, little one, you shall have your breakfast with me ;" he said kindly.

Other passengers began to arrive with luggage, cloaks, cross voices, and confusion, and there was so much to watch, that was novel and amusing, that I forgot how dreary I ought to feel. Amongst others came two girls, who made it known to me that they were returning to the same school as myself, having been spending their Christmas at home, in Norfolk. They were sunk in the depths of grief ; which continued for some time, harrowing my young mind with doleful predictions of what we should all have to go through when we arrived at Madame Freschon's. We exchanged a few confidences and were mutually pleased, when the vessel at last began to move ; upon which my future companions hastily disappeared into the cabin.

It was a doleful voyage ; fog above and fog below, and fog all round ; nothing to be seen anywhere but cold, grey, steamy fog ! More than once the captain exhorted me to go below ; but, finding me obstinate and immovable, he at last let me alone ; but the stewardess—of whose amenity of disposition the less said the better—forcibly took me off by one arm, and made me feel myself a prisoner of the state-cabin. Having got me there, she made me drink coffee and eat biscuits ; but was invincible on the subject of oranges, for which I petitioned. The Misses Jones, my schoolfellows that were to be, had hidden themselves in berths at the top, where they lay groaning miserably ; and the only occupants of the cabin, besides myself, were a tall, strong woman, who had not yet loosened hold of her umbrella, and a little boy of about eight years old, whose vivacity she seemed bent on crushing in the bud. I know not how the rest of the voyage was got over, but I remember feeling myself once more on land on very unsteady limbs, and in a misanthropic frame of mind. An old gentleman and a younger one took undisputed possession of Miss Jones, her sister, and myself, and handed us over to the Custom House authorities, in such a state of mental and physical prostration that my tongue lifted up no remonstrance when my basket was opened by an individual with moustachios, and myself undressed by a little woman in black, with froggy hands. The world was a cheat and happiness a fraud, and I had found it out. O, that I had been born a boy !

We were next transferred to an inn, where we were shut up for two hours in a room with dark blue walls and a picture of Napoleon scaling the Alps. Those two hours were very long, but they came to an end at last. The old gentleman, who was Madame Freschon's father, and the young one, who was Monsieur Emile, her brother, reappeared in a yellow voiture, not unlike a tilted cart. Into this vehicle we were bestowed ; the Joneses sitting in the seat behind and I in front, where I could look out. We started at a foot's pace, leaving the two gentlemen to follow with the baggage, I suppose. The driver was very silent until we got out of Calais, but then he began to whistle, and occasionally broke into a stave, each verse of which ended with "*La liberté ou la mort !*" As night was falling, and a thick fog still reigned, my vision of this new country was limited. I only made out that the road we travelled ran by the side of the canal, and that, on the other side, it was bordered by stunted willows.

We had been creeping on for upwards of an hour and a half at the very slowest of snail's gallops ; when, at a bend in the road, I perceived that we were approaching a town. The willows gave place to cottages from the low, uncurtained windows of which fire-light streamed across the road. The elder Miss Jones immediately gave signs of becoming hysterical ; and, when we entered a narrow street dimly illuminated by little oil-lamps, her sobs, mingled with vituperative expressions against the place, the people and things in general, became really quite alarming. I endeavoured to insinuate a bit of comfort by saying, "Never mind ;" and then asking the younger sister what was the matter ? "O, she is always so ; she can't help it ;" was the reply. When I was speculating on the unhappy state of a girl wailing incessantly—like an Irish widow at a wake—the voiture entered the market-place, where chaffering was going on in a noisy and confusing way. Thence we passed into another narrow street, turned a sharp angle, and stopped before some great wooden gates set in a high wall. The driver descended and opened those ominous portals ; my heart beat like a hammer ; Miss Jones moderated her lament, and the voiture passed into a large court-yard where the ghostly shadows of some great trees were dimly discernible waving against a back-ground of masonry.

"Here is the old den, Minnie ; be quiet, do !" said the younger Miss Jones, in an emphatic whisper.

The house-door was opened ; and, dazed by the sudden burst of light from within, for a minute or two I could see nothing but a crowd of girls clustered like bees on the staircase. I was lifted from the voiture and set on my feet in the hall by a stout female servant ; for, though lively, I was stiff with cold. The Joneses followed, and we were ushered

into a brick-floored parlour by a plain-featured, light-haired woman—the English teacher. Here, in state, sat Madame Freshon, in a cashmere wrapper with a lace bonnet-de-nuit on her head, and over that a cambric handkerchief. She had just woke up from a nap, and looked as dignified as it was possible for a little, stout lady to look under any circumstance. I thought her very comfortable and kind in manner. She kissed us all on both sides of our faces, chatted in French with the Joneses, and then dismissed them to their companions; 'me, as a stranger she detained to ask questions, in broken English, and to give me a little encouragement. I had some coffee with her; then she rang her bell twice, a summons which brought Mademoiselle Laure, a sort of half-boarder, into the presence. To her care madame consigned me, having first repeated the double kiss, and wished me "a good rest."

Mademoiselle Laure was a taciturn person, who carried a key to unlock a certain green gate which cut off communication between the second and third stories of the house. She led me up a wide staircase and passed some doors whence issued a hum of girls; then up again, until we reached a great room containing eight beds, separated into compartments with little white curtains. Across this room were two stands of basins, and from the roof depended a lamp, which my conductress lighted. She then guided me into one of the compartments, unlooped the curtains; and, notifying that I must manage as I could for night-clothes—as our boxes had not come—left me in privacy. Everything was white and exquisitely clean, from the boards of the floor to the wainscot; which rose on three sides of the bed to within a couple of yards of the ceiling. I rather liked the aspect of things in general; but, O! how hard the mattress was. I ascertained afterwards that it was stuffed with straw. Madame considers straw mattresses wholesome; I dare say they are, for I remember no inconvenience after the first night.

I was in that state of active wakefulness when every sense is alert. The distant buzz of voices, the occasional clapping of doors, and atlast a rush—a scutter—a scamper of hundreds of feet up the stairs. The girls were coming to bed. One torrent poured into the dortoir—more poured off in all directions. A silence, fell as the great door was shut, and a voice cries out for order. In a minute, appeared in my division a girl who talked to herself in whispers—she was repeating a lesson—she undressed and lay down beside me, first taking the kindly precaution to cover me up well. In five minutes the lamp was extinguished, and a quarter of an hour after, all the dortoir seemed asleep, but myself.

A noisy bell awoke us at five to the dim, cold, lamp-light again, and everybody turned out in an instant; I, with the rest, bent for

the present on exercising my imitative faculty, and doing what I saw others do. At six the bell rang again, and all rushed downstairs—along the corridor—out at a glass-door—across a little court, and into a detached building which was the classe. There were between seventy and eighty girls, chiefly French, but with a sprinkling of English. These were divided into three classes, each of which occupied one of the rooms into which the building was divided by sliding-doors. There were cold, comfortless-looking stoves in the centre of each; an estrade for the teacher at the upper end, and down either side benches fixed to the walls, with desks divided by panels at each seat, a box for books overhead, and a narrow ledge fastened to the floor, on which to rest the feet. When seated in these boxes or stalls we could not overlook each other without rising, which was forbidden under a penalty. Every girl's desk had an inkstand and a socket for a candle fixed in it.

I was drafted into the youngest class; a place was assigned to me, and a simple lesson given me to learn. Rather subdued by the raw chill of the morning and the solitariness of being amongst so many busy, indifferent strangers, I was glad enough to hide in my box, and watch the curious effect of all those dim flaring candles in the dawn, and the odd shadows flitting on the whitewashed walls. At half-past seven the doors were opened, and the English girls being collected in one room, prayers were hurriedly read by the English teacher; the same ceremony was, meantime, gone through by the French. Then we filed across the court, to breakfast in a large bare apartment, called le réfectoire. A benedicite was said standing, and then we scrambled into our respective seats, the tables extending twice the length of the room, with benches at either side. On sitting down I observed that all the plates on my side were furnished with three tartines a-piece, while those opposite were empty. Down the centre of the table were placed, at intervals, wooden trenchers, with high-piled slices of bread and butter. The meaning of those pieces was no mystery to me. I had heard of stinting, but had no intention of submitting to it in my own person; so I stretched out my audacious little paw, and took possession of a tartine from the trencher nearest to me. If I had fired a pistol I could not have made a greater explosion. All the little girls immediately began to vociferate unintelligibly. Mademoiselle Laure gesticulated, and a person opposite presented my plate with the three tartines close before my eyes, and enforced some rule very emphatically, by rapping my fingers with it. I took a bite out of my piece, and looked round mildly, which increased the clamour tenfold, whereupon Miss Knipe was appealed to. She came down upon me with great severity of countenance, and explained that girls under fifteen being

limited to three tartines, I must submit to the rule also.

"But Uncle Sampson said I was to have as much to eat as I wanted," said I, with a coolness worthy of a better occasion.

The name of Uncle Sampson, dear harmless old man, acted like a spell. I looked so resolute and quiet, that everybody fancied some special exemption, in the shape of double pay, lurked behind, and I was permitted to help myself. The circumstance being reported to Madame, she talked to me about it in private; but I wisely held on to Uncle Sampson, and prevailed, which caused Madame to say I was a child of a republican spirit. I am proud to say that this prompt rebellion of mine led to the abrogation of the law of stinting.

Breakfast over, we were all rung into school again, where we stayed until twelve, when, during an hour's recreation, the girls went where they would—chiefly into the court, where there was a pale wintry sunshine. I preferred the classe, where I could think how much nicer it was being at home with Uncle Sampson and Aunt Martha, than here, where nobody cared for me. Presently in came a child crying, with a book and slate. She sat down on the floor, and began to write with laborious haste, sobbing all the time. She was a pretty, fair-haired girl, younger than myself, and somehow I thought I would help her if I could. My offer was accepted eagerly. She had a page *De l'Histoire Ancienne* to copy out twice, a task which I accomplished speedily. She was English.

"How fast you write! I shall often get you to do my lines for me," said the little damsel cheerfully. I answered nothing; so she took from her pocket two apples, and, after a critical examination of their merits, offered me the smaller one.

"No, thank you; I don't want your apples. Keep them for yourself," said I, putting her hand aside. She promptly restored the fruit to her pocket, and scudded off to show her task. I heard her afterwards telling some of the other girls how I had helped her. She laughed at me, and expressed it as her opinion that I was rather silly. If I had demanded the larger apple for my services she would have respected me. The wisdom of this world comes to us by instalments; it would be a deadly moral poison if inbibed in large quantities.

I arrived at school on Thursday. The next day was Friday—meagre day. The meagre days were very frequent at Madame Freschon's. At dinner, I was, like the rest, helped to sorrel-soup, which appeared to me to be an infusion of chopped grass in hot water, flavoured and enriched with a suspicion of vinegar. It was detestable. Madame, observing that I did not touch it after the first spoonful, hoped I should like it by-and-by, as it was an acquired taste—not,

however, to be acquired in a day, or until the youthful appetite has a very sharp edge to it. Then followed dishes of haricot-beans, with hard-boiled eggs sliced and strewn sparsely over them. Vinegar also predominated here, and I suspected oil, but I did not try; for I was sure they would be as unpalatable as the soup. I dined, therefore, upon bread, which I steeped in water, and sprinkled with pepper and salt. I fancied it had quite a perfume of sausages. This was my Lenten fare as long as I stayed at Madame Freschon's. On other days we had soup, and the meat from which it was made; sometimes potatoes; and always bread, in unlimited quantities. On Sundays, a small glass of vin ordinaire and a finger-biscuit closed the mid-day repast. Once, I remember, Madame proposed to give a Yorkshire dish, in compliment to me, a native of that county. We looked forward to it anxiously. The festivity came off on my birthday. The dish was this! a huge lump of fat bacon boiled in a copper with cabbages, and all served up in one nauseous mess upon a gigantic dish. The French girls despised me for belonging to barbarians, who called that food; and I got quite into a rage at their taunts. Madame's treat was a grand failure, which was always remembered against me as a personal injury.

There was a collation at five o'clock, when each girl received two tartines. The supper was at eight, and consisted of the same as breakfast, namely, milk and water, facetiously styled *bleu céleste*, and bread and butter. The interval between collation and supper was, in winter, spent in the *réfectoire*, where we sewed, played *loto*, or read.

Before we left the table, when the supper was concluded, Madame Duvier, the head teacher, rose in her place, and asked, in an audible tone, "*Qui a le signom négligent?*"—"Moi, Madame," made answer the unlucky wearer of the untidy badge—"Qui a le signom Anglais?"

"Moi, Madame," responded some English girl, convicted of employing her mother-tongue instead of that she came to learn.

"Qui a le signom mauvais Français?"

"Moi, Madame," replied a French girl, found guilty of some grammatical lapse.

Each of these delinquents had to commit to memory thirty lines of French prose. These demands were made thrice daily; so that if the unfortunate possessors of the marks did not contrive to pass them, their lines accumulated fast before the end of the week, as I know to my cost; for I nearly always had one or more. On Saturday, all arrears had to be made up, that day being one of recreation or work, according as we were idle girls, or the reverse.

Penalties were numerous: for being down late; for upsetting ink; for tearing any book; for speaking English; for speaking bad French; and, at certain seasons, for

speaking at all. Each crime had its due punishment. But the iniquity of iniquities—the unpardonable sin—was escalating the green gate, which was locked when we left our bed-rooms in the morning, and forbidden to be passed without a special permit from Madame, until we returned to them at night. I was troubled with a fastidious liking for ablutions before dinner, and, for a long while, escalated the gate daily with impunity; but at last I was caught; and Madame locked me up for two hours in the drawing-room, where I looked at her album, and read a volume of an English novel. Madame talked to me seriously before releasing me from this agreeable durance; but as she laid it on my honour never to transgress again, I ever afterwards washed my hands at the little conduit in the court, which was clear as crystal and cold as ice, and dried them in the Turkish fashion, by waving in the air.

Our masters were four: Monsieur Delâtre for music; Monsieur Pinceau for drawing; Signor Novelli for Italian, and Monsieur Entrechat for dancing. My first introduction to them covered me with ignominy, and was ever afterwards the cause of irritating allusion from Monsieur Delâtre, who was a black, saturnine man, smelling always of garlic and tobacco, and whom I hated.

It was on this wise. Saturday morning was the time for mending rent garments; and, as my ill-luck would have it, I tore a great hole in my stocking with escalating the green gate on Friday morn. It was discovered, and Mademoiselle Laure ordered me to repair it. I sat down to my task in dismay, wishing for dear Aunt Martha to help me; but, as wishing would not bring her, I followed the suggestions of my common sense, and set a patch diagonally across the hole. When Mademoiselle Laure saw what I had done, instead of commending me, she burst forth into a tirade, and called me *tout-à-fait sauvage*, then ordered me to carry my handiwork to Madame in her salon below. I was obliged to obey, and went reluctantly enough, for one of my compatriots whispered that I should catch it.

"*Eutrez!*" cried Madame, when I feebly knocked, and I entered. The four masters were there—being paid, I suppose; and as I had never seen them before, I retreated, saying in English that I would come again. But escape was not so easy. Madame impatiently bade me advance, and taking the stocking from my helpless hand, looked at it in unfeigned horror. I felt all over red-hot, and wished the brick floor would open and engulf me—but it did not. I bit my nether lip, but would not cry—not even when Madame handed the stocking to Monsieur Delâtre, who laughed over it—the monster! The Signor, who was a gentleman, said something kind to me; but I did not understand his words, and little Entrechat shook

his head and smiled. I tried to take the stocking from Madame; but, when I had got it, she ordered me to undo my work, and kept me at her elbow while I did it over again. A nice bit of cobbling it was when done; and, as I at last got away, I heard that odious Monsieur Delâtre laugh like a vampire or a ghoul.

Madame Freshon's birthday was always signalised by the presentation of a gift, to which each girl contributed, according to her liberality or her means. This ceremony was followed either by a dance or a theatrical representation. During the time I was there it was the latter. A sacred drama was selected. I forget its name; but if I recollect aright, it was a composition of Madame Duvivier's, with music by Mons. Delâtre. Of its literary merits I can say nothing; I only remember that Mademoiselle Laure went mad in it, and that in the distribution of the rôles the character of David, a shepherd boy, was portioned out to me. I took it gleefully; for I thought it would be great fun. I had one long speech to learn, and the rest of my part consisted in holding a small gilt lyre (lent by Mons. Pinceau), and sitting on a bank of green baize, musing amongst imaginary flocks, beneath a glowing sky of blue glazed muslin. There was much excitement and much talk about dresses and the company; and some criticisms of each other, not altogether free from sarcasm.

In a month, everybody's part was perfect; and, on Saturday, the grand rehearsal was to come off in the grenier, all of us being attired in the dresses in which we were to act. I had not seen mine during the progress of making, for everything had to be kept out of Madame's sight; and when I was taken into Madame Duvivier's chamber, to be invested with it, previous to appearing on the imaginary stage in the grenier, such a storm of rebellion rose in my heart at the sight of it, as threatened a blank for the character of David. It was a kilt—tunic, they called it—made of Turkey-red calico, profusely spangled with gilt paper, stuck on with gum. A broad gauze sash, white and gilt, was to be tied round my waist. My hair was to be curled on my neck, and confined by a fillet of gold paper; a crook in my hand; long silk stockings and no shoes completed the attire. I looked at it, and said that no power on earth should make me put on that thing, meaning the kilt; but Madame Duvivier flew into a passion, and screamed that she would not have everything spoiled by a little "wild English," like me; and finding ready assistance in her aiders and abettors, in the making of the kilt, I was speedily divested of my natural garments, and in spite of resistance, manual, oral, and lingual, attired in the detested properties of David, a shepherd-boy. They tried to touch my vanity by telling me that I made a sweet boy. Madame Duvivier (she had a

moustache, and looked like a dragoon) kissed me impetuously; and then, as a final appeal carried me—secretly covered up with a cloak—into Madame Freschon's room, that I might behold myself in her great mirror. The effect was not what they anticipated. Directly I saw myself I went down on my knees, and began to weep and cry out that I would not be dressed like that—I would have a frock on! They tried to make me hear reason, by asking, if I had ever heard of a shepherd-boy tending his flocks in white muslin? which I answered by asking, if they had ever heard of one in Turkey-red calico, with gilt spangles? Madame Duvivier said I was a savage; and, after a little consultation, I was dragged up to the grenier, where Mademoiselle Laure, with her long black hair down to her knees, was raving.

My part came in there: I had to calm her frenzy by playing on the lyre, and reciting my speech with agreeable and soothing gestures. I was pushed towards her by Madame, who, in an awful voice, ordered me to commence. Lyre in hand I stood, and, in a faint voice, began my charming; but I charmed the reverse of wisely. I had got to the end of the second line, when Miss Knipe screamed out, "Little David, stand on both legs!" A titter ensued. I had got my left foot curled up round my right knee. I went on growing more nervous every moment; until, about midway, Madame Duvivier yelled ferociously, "David, if you does not put down dat ittle leg, I tie it to de ground!"

The titter became a laugh—the tragedy a comedy; the mad woman was convulsed, and the audience too. They saw it would not do. So I was stripped of my finery, and a French girl of my size being invested with it, went through the rôle with great boldness and success.

On another great holiday, Freschon thought, that instead of the usual games in the court, we had better take a walk into the country. Nothing loth, we set out, two by two, each with her chosen companion. Mine was a French girl, Laurence by name, a queer creature, with a long moveable nose and wild spirits. As we walked, I gave her an account of the meeting of Henry the Eighth and Francis the First on the Field of the Cloth of Gold, embellishing it with little incidents not mentioned in history, but perhaps none the less true for that. We were then trudging along the road which runs through this memorable field; and suddenly the idea struck us that it would be pleasant to walk as far as Ardres; no sooner conceived than suggested aloud to those behind and before. Some said it was five miles, others that it was eight; one remembered that Madame Freschon's sister had given us a general invitation to visit her at all opportunities, and that our presence would therefore be most welcome. We had six hours before dark. In short, the

fates were propitious, the teacher undecided, and we imperious—we would go! The line of march had been broken up during the debate, and it was not reformed. Some of us made little excursions into the fields to gather wild flowers as mementoes of our walk; others tramped up and down that tantalising succession of little rises and falls in the road, with a respectable, solid perseverance, which showed a strong innate sense of duty. Ardres seemed a terribly long way off; but the rest we anticipated, and the galettes which Madame's sister would be sure to give us, sustained us when inclined to weary. At last we saw a wall, a gateway, houses, a little river, and women washing clothes in it—Ardres. Through the gateway we went into a queer old street; and inquiring our way, found the house we sought near the market-place. I believe that at this time (it was the hour for the collation) we had forgotten all historical and romantic histories, and thought chiefly of galettes. The door was a long time in being opened, and then the Flemish servant, to our unutterable disgust, said her mistress was not at home! Some murmured aloud; others stoically faced about, and marched out of the town, declaring that nobody should ever catch them at Ardres again. I felt misanthropic, hungry, and footsore; Laurence was crossly and mischievously vivacious. We looked and felt like a garrison reduced to capitulate on hard terms. And to add to our distress, now that our faces were set towards home, there was the cruel anticipation of what Madame Freschon would say when we arrived there. The little girls were very tired, and some even cried. Laurence carried one on her back for nearly a mile, but then she could go no further, and the child walked the rest of the way, fretting and making us feel dreadfully remorseful. When we were within a couple of miles of home, and it was growing dark, we met Madame's father coming to meet us. How our hearts sank!—but only to rise with a delicious rebound when, on entering the gates, we were received with a motherly blandness, inconceivable to me under the circumstances. The supper was all ready, and we were pressed to partake of it even by Madame Duvivier, who was usually so grim. Prayers and bed were naturally expected to follow: but no; vain hope! our transgression was not to go unpunished. As soon as the benediction was said, with a sweet, satisfied smile on her countenance and the most natural air in the world, Madame rose and cried:

"En classe, mesdemoiselles!"

Crushed and dismayed, we all went into our departments, and were compelled to do the afternoon's lessons. That over, the greater number went to bed; but the Italian class, of which I was one, was still detained to prepare our work for the signor on the morrow. The only revenge we had left us was pretending not to be tired, and exchanging

lively remarks: but Madame Duvivier would not be aggravated: she saw through the manoeuvre.

We never took holiday again.

THE MARKER.

I AM a billiard-marker in the Quadrant. If a man can say a bitterer thing than that of another, I shall be obliged to him if he will mention it, as I shall then have a higher opinion of my profession than before. Everybody else seems to be making capital of their experiences, and why should not I? I see a great deal of what is called life, up in this second storey, and why should I not describe it? I am sure I have plenty of spare time. I have been here long enough to become unconscious of the roar of foot and wheel that rises from the street below; neither is there anything in the apartment itself to distract my attention much; no literature, save an illustrated edition of All-sop's advertisements hung all round the walls, and a statement—which I know to be a lie—in seven colours, about the best cigars in London; no pictures, besides a representation of Mr. Kentfield, which I hope for that gentleman's sake is not a correct one. He has one or both of his hips out, and is striking a ball in one direction while his eyes are steadily fixed in another. Of furniture, there is an immense oblong table with a white sheet upon it, one rickety chair, high-cushioned forms around the room, a rack for the public cues, two painted boards for marking at pool or billiards, a lucifer-match box over the mantel-piece, and spittoons. The atmosphere is at all times chalky. In the evening, cigars and beer and gas make continually their fresh and fresh exhalations, but in the morning their combined aroma is stale. I feel when I first come in as if I were drinking the beer that has been left all night in the glasses, and endeavouring to smoke the scattered ends of the cigars. I sit upon the rickety chair with the rest in my hand, and my head beneath the marking board—sometimes for hours—waiting for people to come. I arrive about twelve o'clock, and there is rarely any one to play before the afternoon. 'Yes, there is one person—Mr. Crimp I call him, and everybody calls him, and he calls himself, Captain Crimp, but I now exhibit him in plain deal, without that varnish of his own applying. His step is not a careless one, but he whistles a jovial tune as he comes up-stairs, until he finds I am alone, when he leaves off at once, ungracefully; first, however, he looks in the cupboard where the wash-hand stand is kept, remarking, "O!" regularly any morning, as though he did it by mistake; and, finding nobody there, he proceeds to business.

Mr. Crimp assists me with his own scrupulously-clean hands in removing the white cloth, and immediately becomes my pupil. I

have taught him several skilful strokes at different times, which his admiration for the science of the game leads him to reward me for, quite munificently. Curiously enough, there is also an understood condition that I should say nothing about this. Later in the day, and when the company has arrived, it often happens that he will get a little money on, and accomplish those feats himself. A certain winning hazard in a corner pocket, which appears particularly simple, I am now instructing him to miss—so that his ball may go round all the cushions and perform its original mission at last. It seems a round-about method enough of accomplishing its object, but it will have its uses for the Captain, I have no doubt. His interest in the game extends even to the condition of the table itself. He knows how the elastic sides are affected by a change of weather, and he prefers the right hand middle pocket, for choice, to play at—it draws. Our lesson commonly lasts about an hour, unless we are interrupted. I have another occasional pupil in young Mr. Tavish. He learns billiards as he would languages or dancing; but he will never do much at it. His attitudes, however, are after the very best models; and, when he has made a fluke, he can look as if he intended it better than any man—a property in all situations of life not a little useful. Mr. Tavish is the pink of fashionable perfection; and, with every garment which he takes off for convenience of play, discloses some new wonder. Two buckles, besides ribands and an India-rubber band, are employed in fastening his waistcoat; his worked suspenders have a hundred loops; his miraculous collar has no visible means of entrance; his tie appears to be a thin strip of sticking-plaster; his new and patent leather boots are patched at the toes and punctured in little holes most marvellously. I actually have observed him trying to look at himself in the pool board. Between two and four come our chance customers, who are the most interesting to me, and of a very various sort.

A couple of brothers who have not met for years, and who are about to part, perhaps for ever—one just returned from the Crimea and the other on the point of starting for India. They talk of their past adventures as they play—of their future prospects, of their respective sweethearts, of their home—for nobody minds a billiard-marker—as though they were quite alone.

A father with his grown-up son will knock the balls about for half-an-hour, to see if he retain his ancient skill, dilating all the while on mortgages, on the necessity of a rich wife, and on the young man's allowance, and compressing the Chesterfield Letters into a fifty game. Now and then comes a parson, who looks into the cupboard, just as Mr. Crimp did, for fear that his diocesan should be in hiding there.

Two University men, who are up in town for a week's lark, but are supposed (I hear) by sanguine friends to be at college, reading at that present; their talk is of the boats, the proctors, the tripos, and of the man who went to the bad.

Sometimes—for I was not born into the world a billiard-marker—these topics touch me nearly. What does it matter? I am here; and, whether through my own bad play, or an unlucky fluke, it is now all one; my mission is to mark, not moralise.

After four, drop in the pool-players: five or six habitués and a few strangers. Some of them gentlemen, but the majority, evident legs—quiet resolute-looking fellows, with hard keen eyes; abstemious moral persons, with iron nerves, and perfectly heartless, who live by this particular pastime. They would win the last half-crown of the player before them, although they knew the loss would insure his immediate suicide. They would remark, after he had drowned himself, that he had only taken to the water. From the prosecution of this game for eight hours daily, their view of life has been formed; it is one gigantic pool to them wherein every man's hand is against the other's, and the misfortune of one makes all the rest happy. Each has a little sort of coffin, locked, which holds his particular cue. He looks along this weapon carefully, to make certain of its straightness, rubs the thin end with scouring-paper, and chalks the top with his own private chalk, of which he carries a piece about with him, in his waistcoat-pocket, everywhere. From the time when I have given out the balls to the last stroke which wins, or divides the pool, these men maintain an almost unbroken silence. No judge in delivery of a death doom, no priest in the celebration of religious rites, could be graver or more solemn than they. "My, blue on yellow, brown your player," or "Red on white, yellow in hand," break forth amidst the hush, like minute-guns during a burial at sea; the click of the balls, the whiz when one is forced into a pocket, are the only other sounds. Many of our visitors in the mid-day ask for lunch, which is invariably toasted cheese; but, these night-birds, with the exception of a little beer and tobacco-smoke, suffer nothing to pass their lips. Sometimes, amidst those solemn scoundrels there appears a jovial face—a naval man on leave, perhaps, or somebody who is really a little screwed, and creates a disturbance: laughing and singing, putting the best off their play, and endangering the warriest by his mad strokes. Mr. Crimp looks on those occasions, as though, being hungry, some one had come between him and his dinner; and I observe his lips to move silently—I do not think in prayer. There is a pretty constant

attendant here, a Mr. Scurvy, who is, I know, his especial aversion. This gentleman comes for no earthly purpose but to amuse himself, and with his spirits always at high pressure. He makes puns, and uses ready-made puns, about everything connected with the game. He is come, he states, on entrance, "To plunge in the quiet pool." "Consider yourself, Captain," said he, yesterday, while he held that instrument over Mr. Crimp, "under a rest." "No rest for the guilty," is his quotation whenever that is called for. He calls the cues that have lost their top-leathers, "ex-cues." You can imagine what a range such a man finds in "stars" and "lives;" how the church and the army are each laid under contribution for his remarks on "cannons;" how "misses" and "kisses" are remarked upon. If the red ball is kissed, he remarks, on each occasion, "No wonder she blushes." And all this waggishness of his is the more creditable, inasmuch as he might just as well whisper it into one of the pockets, as impart it to his company with any hope whatever of appreciation. He does not want that; it is merely that he has an exuberance of merriment, and must let it off somehow: which is to the others generally an awful crime, and beyond their experience. Mr. Scurvy gives me a shilling now and then, as do many of the earlier visitors. I have my rewards from Mr. Crimp; and I am not, besides, ill paid. It is not of the hardships of my profession that I have to complain, (though I am up always until three in the morning, with the thermometer for the last six hours at about eighty), so much as of its unsocial character; nobody trusts me; nobody interests himself in me in the least, or considers me as anything beyond a peripatetic convenience for getting at your ball when it is out of reach. Nobody ever gets familiar with me, except Mr. Crimp, and I am the dumb witness, daily, of innumerable frauds.

I know the real skill of every player to a hair, and how much he conceals of it. I think I may say, from long habit of observation, that I know the characters of nine-tenths of the men who enter this room; and if I do, some of them are exceedingly bad characters. The calm dead hand at a hazard, whom nothing disturbs from his aim; the man who plays for a stroke only when it is a certainty, preferring his own safety to his foe's danger; the hard hitter, from whom no player is secure; the man who is always calling his own strokes flukes; the man who is always calling other people's; and the poor fellow who is for ever under the cushion. My world, which is not a small one, is mapped out for me, with all its different races, upon this table; for I stand apart and mark many things beside the score.

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PROPOSALS FOR A NATIONAL JEST-BOOK.

It has been ascertained, within the last two years, that Britannia is in want of nothing but an official joker. Having such exalted officer to poke her in the ribs when she considers her condition serious, and to put her off with a wink when she utters a groan, she must certainly be flourishing and it shall be heresy to doubt the fact. By this sign ye shall know it.

My patriotism and my national pride have been so warmed by the discovery, that, following out the great idea, I have reduced to writing a scheme for the re-establishment of the obsolete office of Court Joker. It would be less expensive to maintain than a First Lord of the Jokery, and might lead to the discovery of better jokes than issue from that Department. My scheme is an adaptation of a plan I matured some years ago, for the revival of the office of Lord Mayor's Fool; a design which, I am authorised to mention, would have been adopted by the City of London, but for that eminent body, the Common Council, agreeing to hold the office in Commission, and to satisfy the public, in all their Addresses to great personages, that they are never unmindful of its comic duties.

It is not, however, of either of these ingenious proposals (if I may be permitted to call them so) that I now desire to treat. It is of another and far more comprehensive project for the compilation of a National Jest-Book.

Few people, I submit, can fail to have observed what rich materials for such a collection are constantly being strewn about. The parliamentary debates, the audiences given to deputations at the public offices, the proceedings of Courts of Enquiry, the published correspondence of distinguished personages, teem with the richest humour. Is it not a reproach to us, as a humorous nation, that we have no recognised Encyclopædia of these facetious treasures, which may be preserved, and (in course of time), catalogued, by Signor Panizzi in the British Museum?

What I propose is, that a learned body of not fewer than forty members, each to receive two thousand five hundred pounds per annum, free of Income Tax, and the whole to

be chosen from the younger sons, nephews, cousins and cousin-germans, of the Aristocracy, be immediately appointed in perpetuity for the compilation of a National Jest-Book. That, in these appointments, the preference shall be given to those young noblemen and gentlemen who know the least of the subject, and that every care shall be taken to exclude qualified persons. That, the First Lord of the Jokery be, in right of his office, the President of this Board, and that in his patronage the appointments shall rest. That, it shall meet as seldom as it thinks proper. That, no one shall be a quorum. That, on the first of April in every year, this learned society shall publish an annual volume, in imperial quarto, of the National Jest-Book, price Ten Pounds.

I foresee that I shall be met at this point by the objection that the proposed price is high, and that the sale of the National Jest-Book will not remunerate the country for the cost of its production. But, this objection will instantly vanish when I proceed to state that it is one of my leading ideas to make this gem of books the source of an immense addition to the public revenue, by passing an act of Parliament to render it compulsory on all householders rated to the relief of the poor in the annual value of twenty-five pounds, to take a copy. The care of this measure I would entrust to Mr. FREDERICK PEEL, the distinguished Under-Secretary for War, whose modest talents, conciliatory demeanour, and remarkable success in quartering soldiers on all the private families of Scotland, particularly point him out as the Statesman for the purpose.

As the living languages are not much esteemed in the public schools frequented by the superior classes, and as it might be on the whole expedient to publish a National collection in the National tongue (though too common and accessible), it is probable that some revision of the labors of the learned Board would be necessary before any volume should be finally committed to the press. Such revision I would entrust to the Royal Literary Fund, finding it to have one professor of literature a member of its managing committee. It might not be amiss to embellish the first volume of the National Jest-Book with a view of that wealthy institution

and with explanatory letter-press descriptive of its spending forty pounds in giving away a hundred ; of its being governed by a council which can never meet nor be by any earthly power called together, of its boasted secrets touching the distresses of authors being officially accessible at all times, to more than one publisher ; and of its being a neat example of a practical joke.

The style of the National Jest-Book, in narrating those choice pieces of wit and humour of which it will be the storehouse, to be strictly limited (as everything in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland ought to be), by precedent. No departure from the established Jest-Book method, to be sanctioned on any account. If the good old style were sufficient for our forefathers, it is sufficient for the present and all future generations. In my desire to render these proposals plain, complete, and practical, I proceed to offer some specimens of the manner in which the National Jest-Book will require to be conducted.

As, in the precedents, there is a supposititious personage, by name Tom Brown, upon whom witty observations are fathered which there is a difficulty in fastening on any one else, so, in the National Collection, it will be indispensable to introduce a similar fiction. I propose that a certain imaginary Mr. Bull be established as the Tom Brown of the National collection.

Let us suppose, for example, that the learned Board, in pursuing their labors for the present year one thousand eight hundred and fifty-six, were reducing to writing the National jests of the month of April. They would proceed according to the following example.

BULL AND THE M.P.

A waggish member of Parliament, when vaccination had been introduced by Dr. Jenner upwards of half a century, and had saved innumerable thousands of people from premature death, from suffering, and from disfigurement—as, down to that time, had been equally well-known to wise men and fools—rose in his place in the House of Commons and denounced it forsooth. “For,” says he, “it is a failure, and the cause of death.” One meeting Mr. Bull, and telling him of this pretty speech, and further of its eliciting from that astonishing assembly no demonstration, “Aye,” cries Bull, looking mighty grave, “but if the Member for Nineveh had mistaken, in that same place, the Christian name of a Cornet in the Guards, you should have had howling enough !”

Again, another example.

BULL AND THE BISHOP.

A certain Bishop who was officially a learned priest and a devout, but who was individually either imbecile or an abusive and indecent common fellow, printed foul letters wherein he called folks by bad names, as

Devils, Liars, and the like. A Cambridge man, meeting Bull, asked him of what family this Bishop was and to whom he was related ? “Nay, I know not,” cries Bull, “but I take my oath he is neither of the line of the apostles, nor descends from their Master.” “How, now,” quoth the Cambridge man, “hath he no connection with the Fishermen ?” “He hath the connection that Billingsgate hath with Fishermen, and no other,” says Bull. “But,” quoth the Cambridge man again, “I understand him to be great in the dead tongues.” “He may be that too,” says Bull, “and yet be small in the living ones, for he can neither write his own tongue nor yet hold it.”

Sometimes it would be necessary, as in the Tom Brown precedents, to represent Bull in the light of being innocently victimised, and as not possessing that readiness which characterises him in the foregoing models. The learned body forming the National Collection would then adopt the following plan.

BULL GOT THE BETTER OF.

Bull, riding once from market on a stout Galloway nag, was met upon the Tiverton highway by a footpad in a soldier's coat (an old hand), who rifled him of all he carried and jeered him besides, saying, “A fig for you. I can wind you round my finger, I can pull your nose any day,”—and doing it, too, contemptuously, while he spoke, so that he brought the blood mounting into Bull's cheeks. “Prithee tell me,” says Bull, pacifically, “why do you want my money ?” “For the vigorous prosecution of your war against the birds of prey,” replies the fellow with his tongue in his cheek,—who indeed had been hired by Bull to scare those vermin, just when the farm-traps and blunderbusses had been found to be horribly out of order, and were beginning to be put right. For which he now took all the credit. “But what have you done ?” asks Bull. “Never *you* mind,” says the fellow, tweaking him by the nose again. “You have not made one good shot in any direction that I know of,” cries Bull ; “is *that* vigorous prosecution ?” “Yes,” cries the fellow, tweaking him by the nose again. “You have discomfited me the best and bravest boys I sent into the field,” says Bull ; “is *that* vigorous prosecution ?” “Yes,” cries the fellow, tweaking him by the nose again. “You have brought down upon my head the heaviest and shamefullest book with a blue cover (called the Fall of Kars), in all my library,” says Bull ; “is *that* vigorous prosecution ?” “Yes,” says the fellow, tweaking him by the nose again. “Then,” whippers Bull to his Galloway nag, as he gave him the rein, “you and I had better jog along feebly, for it should seem to be the only true way of prospering.” And so sneaked off.

Occasionally, the learned body would resort to the dialogue form, for variety's sake. As

thus;—throughout these instances, I suppose them engaged with the compilation for the month of April in the present year.

DIALOGUE BETWEEN BULL AND A PERSON OF QUALITY.

PERSON OF Q. So, Bull, how dost?

BULL. My humble duty and service to your lordship, with your lordship's gracious leave,—I am tolerable.

PERSON OF Q. The better for a firm, and durable, and glorious peace; eh, Bull?

BULL. Humph!

PERSON OF Q. Why, what a curmudgeon art thou, Bull! Dost thou begrudge the peace?

BULL. The Lord forbid, my humble duty and service to your noble lordship. But, I was thinking (by your lordship's favour) how best to keep it.

PERSON OF Q. Be easy on that point. There shall be a great standing-army, and a great navy, and your relations and friends shall have more than their share of the bad, doubtful, and indifferent posts in both.

BULL. How as to the good posts, your honorable lordship?

PERSON OF Q. Humph! (laughing.)

BULL. Will your noble honor vouchsafe me a word?

PERSON OF Q. Quickly then, Bull, and don't be prosy. I can't abide being bored.

BULL. I humbly thank your noble honorable lordship for your noble honor's kind permission. Army and navy, I know, will both be necessary; but, I was thinking (saving your noble lordship's gracious presence) that my good friends and allies the people of France can move in concert in large bodies, and are accustomed to the use of arms.

PERSON OF Q. (frowning). A military nation. None of that here, Bull, none of that here!

BULL. With your noble lordship's magnificent toleration, I would respectfully crave leave to scatter a few deferential syllables in the radiancy of your noble countenance. I find that this characteristic is not peculiar to my friends the French, but belongs, more or less, to all the peoples of Europe: whereof the English are the only people possessing the peculiarity of being quite untrained in the power of associating to defend themselves, their children, their women, and their native land. Will your noble honor's magnanimity bear with me if I represent that your noble lordship has, for some years now, discouraged the old British spirit, and disarmed the British hand? Your noble honor's Game Preserves, and political sentiments, have been the cause of—

PERSON OF Q. (interrupting). S'dearth, Bull, I am bored. Make an end of this.

BULL. With your honor's gracious attention, I will finish this minute. I was about

to represent, with my humblest duty to your noble lordship, that if your honorable grace could find it in your benignity to take the occasion of this Peace to trust your countrymen a little—to show some greater confidence in their love of their country and their loyalty to their sovereign—to think more of the peasants and less of the pheasants—and if your worship's loftiness could deign to encourage the common English clay to become moulded into so much of a soldierly shape as would make it a rampart for the whole empire, and place the Englishman on an equality with the Frenchman, the Piedmontese, the German, the American, the Swiss, your noble honor would therein do a great right, timely, which you will otherwise, as certain as Death, (if your noble lordship will excuse that levelling word), at last condescend to try to do in a hurry when it shall be too late.

PERSON OF Q. (yawning.) Prithee get out, Bull. This is revolutionary, and what not; and I am bored.

BULL. I humbly thank your noble lordship for your gracious attention. (And so, bowing low, retires, expressing his high sense of the courtesy and patience with which he has had the distinguished honor of being received.)

I shall conclude by offering one other example for the guidance of the learned Commission of forty compilers, which I have no doubt will be appointed within a short time after the publication of these suggestions. It is important, as introducing Mrs. Bull, and showing how she may be discreetly admitted into the National Jest Book, on occasions, with the conjugal object of eliciting Mr. Bull's best points.

Example.

MRS. BULL'S CURLPAPERS.

Bull, in this same month of April, takes it into his head that he will make a trip to France. So away he goes, after first repairing to the warehouse of honest MURRAY in Albemarle Street, Piccadilly, to buy a guide-book, and travels with all diligence both to Paris and Bordeaux. Suddenly, and while Mrs. Bull supposeth him to be sojourning in the wine-growing countries, not drinking water there you may be sure, lo, he re-appeareth at his own house in London, attended by a great wagon filled with newspapers! Mrs. Bull, admiring to see so many newspapers and those foreign, asks him why he hath returned so soon and with that cargo? Saith Bull, "they are French curl-papers for thy head, my dear." Mrs. Bull protests that in all her life she never can have need of a hundredth part of that store. "Any how," saith Bull, "put them away in the dark, housewife, for I am heartily ashamed of them." "Ashamed of them!" says she. "Yes," retorts Bull, "and thus it is. While I was in France, sweetheart, a deputation waited on

the Government in England, touching the duties on foreign wines. And the French newspapers were so astounded by the jokery with which the deputation was received, and by the ignorance of the Government, which was wrong in all its statements (one of the best informed among them computes to the extent, in one calculation, of seventeen hundred and fifty per cent), that I was ashamed to see those journals lying about, and bought up all I could find!"

My project for a National Jest-Book is now before the Public. I would merely remark, in conclusion, that if the revenue arising from the compulsory purchase of the collection should enable our enlightened government to dispense with the Income Tax, the public will be the gainers: inasmuch as the new impost will provide them with something tangible to show for their money.

BOND AND FREE.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS. CHAPTER THE FIRST.

UNDER the murmuring limes of Trinity, in the radiant May term, two students, Gray and Persey, walked, now backward and forward; now beneath the fragrant avenue; now on the path that fringes the stream from Cam. The evening was as warm as July; the sky-colours which tinged tree and turret, seemed a fit herald of midsummer. Over the old town the never-failing music of its bells clashed cheerily; from the earth-shaking peal of St. Mary's to the tinkle of the College Chapel, that was calling the white-robed students, flitting ghostlike, under corridor and arch, to prayer. Upon the water lingered yet a fairy fleet, and the light dip of the feathered oar; full on the open stream—sharp under the little bridge—touched the ear pleasantly and dreamily.

"How can you talk so mournfully, my dear fellow," said Gray, "amidst these beautiful sounds and sights? I do believe if you were amongst the blest you would find something to make a grievance of. Your voice sounds discordant."

"Ah, Gray," returned the other, "as for the glory and the beauty; it is glory and beauty I bewail. That is the pity of it. How cruel that this gate of life should be made so fine, but that when we have passed through it, behold for us—who have an experience of dreamland—nothing but the pitiless world. I have youth, I have health. I have money here. I have dear friends—you, Gray, the chief—and there is not a single duty in this college life which can be called distasteful."

"Morning chapel?" suggested Gray.

"I have taken as high places in the examination as I expected."

"Well, then, what is the matter? What, in the Fiend's name, are you coming to?"

"This, man; that it must all end, and I know not how soon. How can I enjoy the

noontide, when perhaps I may never see another sun? If Sir William withdrew his protection, I should be a beggar to-morrow."

"Indeed? But I knew one once who reminds me of you very strongly. He was a prudent youth who never would touch pudding in vacation time for fear he should miss it when he got back to school; and I remember he died (and serve him right) the very last day of our Christmas holidays. Think of the good things that poor boy must have lost for a whole six weeks; and take warning. Seriously, what right have you to be discontented? Compare your fate with mine; and reap a horrid joy. I have no rich patron to help me even for a little time; and, though I be a scholar, a fellowship is too wide a leap for me. Old Doctor Wild is my poet, and has sung my song before:

In a melancholy study,
None but myself,
Methought my muse grew muddy;
After seven years reading
And costly breeding,
I felt but could find no pelf.

Into learned rags I've rent my plush and satin,
And now am fit to beg in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin;
Instead of Aristotle would I had got a patten;
Alas! poor scholar! whither wilt thou go?

Cambridge, now I must leave thee,
And follow fate;
College hopes do deceive me;
I oft expected
To have been elected,
But desert is reprobate.

Masters of colleges have no common graces,
And they that have fellowships have but common places;
And those that scholars are, they must have handsome faces.

Alas! poor scholar! whither wilt thou go?"

"Nay, my good friend Leonard," said the other,

"I have hit it:
Peace, good man, fool;
Thou hast a trade will fit it;
Draw thy indenture,
Be found at adventure,
An apprentice to a free school;

There thou mayst command,
By William Lilly's charter;
There thou mayst whip, strip,
And hang and draw and quarter,
And commit to the red rod
Both Will, and Tom and Arthur;
Ay, ay! 'tis thither, thither wilt thou go?"

"I should never have given you, Persey, credit for knowing that old song; I'll wager there's no other Trinity man who does. But you're right, I must take to tutoring."

"I wish, for my own part," said Persey, mournfully, "that I had never left it."

"You a tutor? Why, what do you mean, Brooke?"

"Sit down on the sloping grass here under

cover of the bridge, and I'll tell you a tale, my friend, which will astonish you :

"Where I was born I cannot accurately state, but it must have been some nineteen years ago, or by'r Lady, inclining to a score. My parents—Heaven forgive me for so speaking of the authors of my being—interested themselves about me to the extent of ringing the gate-bell of a certain workhouse in Hampshire, and leaving me outside with an insufficient provision of flannel. In that stately and well-swept mansion I spent my earliest years: my dress was of a similar colour to this present Trinity gown, but of a coarser material."

"What happened to you at the workhouse?"

"My skin was kept very clean and my hair cut remarkably close, but otherwise I had little to complain of. There is no bullying to speak of among your workhouse brats—nothing like your public school despotisms, for instance—but there is also no play. For my part, I liked the school-hours as well as any of my time there, except perhaps when I was in the old men's ward. When I could get in there upon the sly, and listen to their stories of the great world without, I suppose I was as happy as I then could be. I had to skim across a little paved court like a swallow, in order to escape the eyes of the master and his wife, who seemed to be always watching out of the four windows of their sitting-room at once. If caught, I was shut up and kept on bread and water; if otherwise, I was well repaid for all risks. Imagine a little unfurnished dusky bed-room, smelling of old men and bad tobacco, being a sort of Paradise to me! Each upon the edge of his truckle-bed, sat smoking, bleary-eyed, misshapen, toothless. The oldest man's constant topic of conversation was the American war; he was a church-and-king man of very obstinate character, and defended the most despotical and illegal acts. He had been a soldier, and had received a terrible wound (on Bunker's Hill, I think). He was intensely proud of the scar which he constantly displayed to the minister, or whomsoever else might visit him. I don't remember his name, and indeed I doubt whether he remembered it at that time himself; but we called him Crutchy, because he walked with a couple of sticks. Biller, who was the next oldest man, was leader of the opposition, and a red-hot radical. He had been imprisoned, when already in years, for his republican principles at the Peterbro' period; and the way in which he disposed of the king and the lords and the bishops beat Tinkler at the Cambridge Union. He would look round furtively; make sure there was no spy in the camp; hobble to the door to see the master was not outside even; and then, in reply to some aggravating statement of Crutchy's, would assert in a loud whisper that those three dignified classes were 'a pack of rogues

as ever was.' These contests were immensely interesting to me: and I confess I sided with the fiery Biller. Crutchy sat alone, with a certain dignity, like one of the early gods, lamenting the new order of things upon the earth. If anybody woke him up on a sudden to ask him any question, no matter what, he would reply without hesitation, 'They should send out a fleet, sir;' which, as was generally understood, was a plan of his for the recovery of the American colonies.

"Next to this parliament, as I said, I liked my school-times. At eight years old I was a great scholar, and the pedagogue's favourite. He mentioned me to the parson, and his reverence was as pleased with me as he; the parson's wife, too, Mrs. Parmer, fell in love with my eyes, and my hair that would have curled if the relentless shears of workhouse destiny had permitted it; and after some consultation with the squire, Sir William Persey, I was removed to a higher sphere, —the village-school. My workhouse name was Edward Brooke; but here I got all sorts of nick-names expressive of my pauperism. I was the social footstool upon which they mounted with a complacent satisfaction, surprised to find themselves so high: poor simple rogues, if they had only known what was likely to befall me, they would have treated me well enough, as my master did. I was going to say that he perceived I was a protégé, and played his cards accordingly; but you will think that I am too bitter upon all these good folks. Well then, he was a benevolent person erring on the side of kindness, if at all, and he gave my patron such astonishing accounts of my progress. He even taught me privately, and made believe I had learnt all in school-hours. Young ladies who came to teach us on Sundays, were enraptured with the way in which I disposed of the kings of Judah; the rector dared not ask me a question in arithmetic for his own credit; and, crowning success! Sir William himself came down to the school in the twelfth year of my age, and presented me with a Euclid and a pat on the head. How my master worked me at that distressing volume! I wished myself a hundred times back at the workhouse with Crutchy and Biller; for, although I was a sharp boy, I was not a miracle, and stuck at the asses' bridge as long as any Etonian. Nevertheless, when the great man next visited us, I bore his kindly but searching examination in the earlier books, with great steadiness and success.

Then it was that I became pedagogue. I was made monitor over the other boys, and assured that my advancement would not cease there if I continued as I began. I had now plenty of spare time, and read hard at all sorts of subjects. The master could assist me with Latin; but Greek I had to get up by myself in a mournful manner; nor did I learn for a length of time even, how to pro-

nounce the words. Mr. Parmer and Sir William were once disputing about a passage in Virgil, in the schoolroom, as to whether a certain word was *longus* or *latus*; the baronet was of the former opinion, and I was fortunate enough to be able to corroborate him; but 'nevertheless, sir,' said I to the parson, 'it's as broad as it's long;' a most courtier-like reply, which, in a few days, bore ample fruit. Good Mr. Parmer came one morning to prepare me for a great preferment. He wished me well, he said, and had himself agreed with the squire upon my merits and their reward. 'I know Sir William well; perhaps better than any other man. When he takes a liking there is no knowing what length he will not go, to serve its object. I consider,' he finished, 'if you only take ordinary pains to please him, your fortune's made.'

"The next day I was sent for to Hilton Hall; I had hitherto only seen its turrets above the mighty elms from the upper windows of the workhouse; its owner himself I had seen rarely, for he went but little abroad, had grown—on account of having lost a beautiful wife years ago it was said—almost a recluse. He took but little interest even in his broad lands and glorious home, and I noticed, as I pushed open the Lodge-gates—for the keeper seeing whom I was, did not trouble himself to help me—how rusty were the hinges, and that the leaves in the great avenue were lying where the last night's wind had left them; the mansion was on very high ground, and as I emerged from the elm-tree drive, on the sweep before the door, I saw half Hampshire lying beneath me. There was much pasture set with oaks, and undulating gently to the level cornlands; on each side were enormous woods, on which the fiery finger of autumn had been laid; and on the right more upland; a tower or steeple stood here and there, and one white windmill. Upon the horizon gleamed a silvery line, which I had never seen before; it was the sea. I ascended the great stone steps,—why I did not enter at the back-door I have no notion—and pulled the quaint bell-handle not too gently. I felt envious and somehow aggrieved; not to have even known of such sights as these before; and yet to have been within a mile of them my life-long seemed very strange. I was ushered into the library, and found Sir William at his desk, over a parchment. A stained-glass window threw a flood of coloured light about his pallid forehead, and surrounded, as he was with such uncared-for pomp, and matter-of-course magnificence, it was no wonder, perhaps, that he seemed to me almost a superior being.

"Mr. Brooke," he said, and it was the first time that the workhouse boy had ever been dignified by such a title,—"I like your manners, I like your appearance, and I perceive you have considerable talent. Do you think you should be pleased to reside in my house here,

and pursue your studies under a fitting tutor? You will find me a kind and good-natured person, and—' he seemed to be weighing his words here—'and a powerful friend; but you must take care not to cross me.'

"I was fourteen years old, Gray, and the honest bread of labour looked coarse and unpalatable beside the cake and wine of dependence. I murmured, 'Yes, Sir William,' with gratitude.

"Come nearer," said the Baronet, and I approached until I could perceive the object of his studies; it was a fantastic sort of tree of great height and many branches, from which hung pendulous medals, with names and dates upon them.

"Do you know what these are, boy?"

"Kings," I said; thinking of my table of the Kings of Judah.

"Not far out," he said; he pointed to his own name hanging alone; 'I am the last, you see, boy, of all the Perseys; the rotting branch that shall never put forth a leaf.'

"Although of course entirely unable to appreciate the pride of ancestry, I gazed upon him with an unaffected pity, and he perceived it.

"You, parish workhouse boy," said he, as if annoyed, 'would you not change places with me to-morrow, if you could, for all this and more?'

"No, indeed, sir," I replied, naively, 'you are too old.'

"I knew that I had spoken ill the moment after, and crimsoned to the forehead; but, with calmness and no trace of displeasure, he said, 'Right, boy, right.' He then added, 'Who is your father, sir? Brooke, Brooke, I remember no such name in these parts.'

"I never had one," I said, mournfully.

"Nor I a son," answered he, in the same tone. Then, after a pause, he said, 'We will fill, henceforth, those places for one another,' and, kissing my brow, bade me go home, and make my preparations for removal.

"So little a box that I could carry it on my shoulders, contained all my scanty stock of books and clothes; and, with this, I left the schoolmaster's cottage—where I had boarded for nearly six years—for the house of my adopted father.

"The tumult that occurred in the village was very great; and its circling eddies extended, with diminished force, over all the country round. The most popular opinions on the subject were, firstly, that Sir William had gone mad; secondly, that a designing boy, of the name of Brooke, had flattered him into adopting him; and thirdly, that the baronet had taken the tardy step of acknowledging an illegitimate offspring of his own.

"My own belief is, that the promise of adoption was a mere momentary impulse of my patron, and that he had intended nothing further, when he sent for me, than to give me a good education. His natural genero-

sity, aided by some vanity, perhaps, had urged him to do this; and afterwards, the opposition of distant relatives, and the obstacles to my advancement he met with on all sides, no less than his increasing partiality to myself, decided him still more positively in my favour. He was the most self-willed person, I should think, who ever breathed. Woe be to that man within his power, who dared to thwart him! It was with the utmost difficulty that I could save the hoary-headed butler from expulsion, for having once omitted to show me a customary mark of respect. 'The slightest want of respect to Mr. Brooke,' the baronet said to his whole retinue, 'will be visited by instant dismissal.'

"A university gentleman came to be my tutor within a week, and I settled down to my new course of life without much difficulty. I had no very gross vulgarities to get rid of; and Sir William's conversation was as good an antidote to anything of the sort, as can be conceived. He had read extensively, had travelled far, and had benefited largely by both experiences. His talk was of that rare and courteous sort which seems to acquire information, while in reality it is imparting it; and presented a striking contrast to his stubbornness and almost savage will. I advanced readily in classics; and, from a desire to please my benefactor, worked hard at the mathematics; which I detested, and ever shall detest.

"I seldom visited the village; it had become hateful, from the unpleasant remarks and curious questions that I was sure to be there subjected to; but the park was a world wide enough for me. My patron seemed to grow better pleased with me daily—and indeed he had nothing to complain of; albeit I purchased his favour at great cost. I had no feeling towards him warmer than gratitude; and the perpetual guard I had to keep upon my speech and actions was very irksome. I could not choose but see how unjust, and even cruel he could be, when displeased; and was always in terror lest it should be my turn to excite his wrath. It is not meet, Gray—it would be painful to myself—to narrate any of the many instances of this; but you must take my word for it, and remember it, in case any quarrel should happen between Sir William and his adopted son. You look shocked at what I have already said, and think me an ingrate! If this man, then, has in truth bought over my soul to silence, as well as made me the automaton of his will, I do not think he has paid too much for it. Do I not please him? Am I not a standing boast to him; the advertisement of his virtues; the object through which his enemies delight to pierce him; the envy of my inferiors, the scorn of my equals, the pity of such as you? Is there nothing due to me? Have I not a right to have been born as self-willed—as violent—as he?"

"Certainly, my good friend," said Gray, calmly, "and as unjust, also, and as cruel?"

"You shall know what it is I have to bear. Not a year ago, when I was coming up to this college, at Sir William's wish, he said to me, of a sudden, 'Brooke, you must now take my name.' I knew this would anger his few relatives to the uttermost; that it would provoke endless misapprehension of my own position; that it would make me more his goods and chattels than ever. I said, respectfully, 'Sir, I would much rather not.' Not liking to mention my real reasons, I mumbled something about destroying all chance of my being found by my parents. He broke forth with, 'What, sirrah, do you want to be a beggar's brat again?' He took down a walking-stick, and I half-suspected that he was going to strike me with it, in which case I should have left his house that instant, and shaken the dust from my shoes before his face; but he only pointed to the handle, which was of ivory, and very ill in keeping with the poor hazel staff. 'The top of this was once brown also, sir,' said he; 'but it did not suit my fancy. The man who made it remonstrated at my wishing it to be changed. But changed it shall be, quoth I; for I do what I will with my own; and changed it was. I wish you, too, to have a fine handle; and you will be henceforth Mr. Brooke Persey.' Nor was this the first or the last time within a score, that I have been brought to a knowledge of my precarious place. You know, then, all my history,—my low beginning, my perilous height, and the unreliable reed on which I lean. The night is growing chill, Gray. Let us go in."

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

BROOKE PERSEY was a fellow-commoner; Leonard Gray, the son of a plain yeoman, was a sizar. They had formed an acquaintance in the lecture-room, which had soon ripened into friendship; but their companions and pursuits were far different; the rich protégé kept his couple of horses and had a dinner-party at least once a week; the scholar dined in the hall, and had enough to do apparently to keep himself. He made no use of his rich friend whatever; "not through pride, be sure," said he, "but because I cannot afford to spend much time in pleasure of any sort; foot-exercise is best for me, and your wines would only incapacitate me from working; like you, Persey, I have neither father, mother, nor relative (save one dear little sister); nay, and I have a patron too, if I chose, in my tutor; who, for all his donnish ways and personal grandeur, is as kind a man as breathes. He offered to lend me money to keep me up here, in a manner I shall not easily forget; but, having got so far without a crutch, I must make shift to finish my journey by help of my own legs."

It was the season now at Cambridge when

the quaint college-gardens are filled with lovers and sisters and friends; when the gownsman evinces sudden interest in chapel and museum, and plays the Cicerone, not without the reward that he most loves: when the father comes to visit the scenes of his youth and recognises his former self in the complacent Freshman son; when the sister thinks she never saw such handsome youths before, and one whom she forgets to name seems to her to be the king of all.

So came Sir William Persey from his town-house; and, by the same train—in a more humble class, came Gray's little sister, Constance, from Audley End. Not that she was one hair's-breadth shorter than she ought to have been, or the least less plump; but so much round the fairy wrist, and so much round the graceful neck, and so much round the dainty, dainty waist, in the perfectest proportion that could be, as I should have liked to have proved by measurement; but she was called little from endearment, by everybody. There was a strange old person with her, who seemed to have no particular virtue beyond that of loving her and of extolling Leonard, and who must have been the orphan's foster-mother, and to see the two (after they had left their boxes at some humble lodging) in the scholar's attic was a pleasant sight. Such a charming little dinner they had, there, with audit ale—of which Constance drank one thimbleful to please her brother—and ices at dessert, which rendered the old lady speechless for some minutes, and made her observe, subsequently, to the bedmaker (with whom a confidence, founded on Leonard's excellencies, was soon established), "that they would lay cold at the pit of her stomach for days;" then the Cambridge coffee that is equalled nowhere else, and the anchovy-toast which is a special wonder of its own;—and it is time to go to chapel. Gray's tutor takes fair Constance's rounded arm and puts her in the best seat to hear the anthem; and, not without a sigh, I hope, he thinks of his celibate state when he finds his eyes involuntarily wandering from his book to her. The two hundred young men in white surplices opposite, too, find their eyes, not at all involuntarily, doing likewise, and especially Mr. Edward Brooke Persey was smitten through and through. His patron, Sir William, sat on the master's right hand resolving many things in his deep mind; he thought, perhaps, of the days long since when he had sat in those high seats, in youth, among the spangled gowns; delighting in the present, believing all who foretold of his brilliant future, and contrasted the past time and its prophecies with the stern reality, with his sad childlessness, and few grey hairs; or looked beneath him upon the fine face of his adopted son, and seemed to gather comfort and almost a father's joy; perhaps, too, his heart was stirred at the sight of Constance; and the

wondrous mystic music began to talk to him of the happy dead, who was once as fair as she.

While the organ was yearning its last, and the great throng was pushing to the doors, Brooke whispered, "Did you see that girl, Gray? I could scarcely keep my eyes off her all the service."

"She is my sister," answered Gray, quietly; and he took her out without introducing them.

When Brooke visited his friend's rooms the next morning, he found the door closed. This was the more deplorable because he had devoted an unusual attention to his dress. Moreover he could hear voices discoursing through the double doors, which convinced him that his banishment was intended; he had missed the note which was then awaiting him at his own rooms:—

However ridiculous it may seem, my dear Persey, I feel it my duty, after your confession of last evening, not to suffer my sister to meet you. In our widely different positions anything serious must be out of the question; and I cannot permit her happiness to be risked by a flirtation with so gallant a cavalier.

Brooke knew at once, or thought he knew, that Leonard meant more than he wrote. Something told him that his own impatience of dependence was slight compared with Gray's abhorrence for that condition.

"It is not the workhouse, but the hall," thought Brooke, "that makes me thus unfit for Constance Gray."

Impulsive, head-strong, he had fallen madly in love with her, and made up his mind to ask Sir William that same day what he might expect of him, and know the best or worst at once and for ever.

So, when the company of high-bred youths were gone, whom Brooke had asked to meet the baronet, and the patron and the protégé were left together alone, this talk came out of the former's question.

"Why, Brooke, did you not ask this Gray to meet me of whom you have written so much?"

"He does not mix with this set at all, sir; he is a poor man—a sizar, in short!"

"That is not well, boy! you should choose your companions a little more exclusively—you must separate."

"Sir!"

"Politely, and without injury to his feelings; but it must be done; he will be, doubtless, well content if you offer him Appleton. He is going into the church, I suppose—it is some hundred and fifty pounds a-year, and the incumbent is of very great age."

Sir William yawned at the notion of such longevity; without reflecting how near seventy he was getting himself.

"You mistake my friend, sir, believe me! he would not take a shilling as a gift from me or any man; he is the most independent fellow in the world!"

"Why do you talk to me of independence?" interrupted the baronet. "You and this sizar seem to be birds of a feather; do you know why you are not a sizar? Why not a village schoolmaster? Why not——?"

But despite his self-willed fury, the patron was shamed and checked by what he read in the young man's eyes.

"Why not what? Why not go on, Sir William?" said the boy, in a voice in which contempt had quite overmastered prudence. "Here, under my own roof; which you have bestowed upon me."

"Brooke," said the old man generously, and after a pause, "you have spoken truth; but not too respectfully. Give me your hand."

"I do, sir," the other readily replied; "but unless you comply with this request of mine, it will be to bid you farewell." He hesitated a moment, as if in doubt whether to confess his sudden passionate love, and then added: "It seems to me not unreasonable that I should ask you, who have been so munificent to me, what further favour you intend to grant; I wish to have the power of proving myself fully sensible, sir, of what I owe to you."

The transient feeling which had prompted his confession had quite passed away from the baronet's mind. He was sorry for it even, when his protégé dared thus to address him.

"What!" he broke forth, "do you wish me, then, to live in furnished lodgings, and give up the hall to you?"

"I want, sir, only to be permitted the choice of a profession, and, moreover, to have something guaranteed me to reckon upon as my own."

"An ambassadorship and five thousand pounds a-year for life, perhaps. You are very modest for an adopted son, upon my word. What do you say, now, to my bid of one hundred and fifty pounds a-year?"

"I say, Sir William, that I should accept it with eagerness."

"Then, by Heaven! you shall have it, and not a shilling more," answered the patron. He took up his hat and gloves, and put them on with teeth set and lips closed, suppressing the anger that raged within him. He left the room without another word.

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

THERE were no candles alight that evening in Leonard's room; for he sat at the open window with his sister, looking out into the moonlit night, and on the sleeping court beneath; where the silver fountain never ceased to plash and sing.

"I fear, dear brother, still, that I am a heavy burthen to you; I and dear Dame Roberts; how free you would feel, Leonard, if you did but have your little income to yourself, and how happy I, if I could earn something with my hands."

"You will earn something with your

tongue, which shall not be a reward, if you talk so," said Leonard playfully; "what do you mean by speaking of my little income in that disparaging way? One hundred and fifty pounds per annum, besides my scholarship—which, I can tell you, is an enormous source of profit, although we are bound to secrecy as to the exact amount—should, I think, be enough and to spare for us three; not to mention putting by a something for your marriage-portion when you have made up your mind as to the particular nobleman."

Constance laughed a little laugh, and blushed a little blush; but the laugh ceased and the blush grew deeper as Dame Roberts' voice came out to them from the room:

"That may be a nearer matter than you think, Master Leonard; for she has fallen in love already with a young duke or a lord, as I believe; and, in church too, of all the places in the world."

"Ah!" said her brother rather seriously.

"What is this young lord like, sister?"

"Nobody, Leonard; and I wonder at your being so foolish, dame."

But the old lady was not to be so put down. "I can't say for certain," she said, "never having seen him myself, sir; but as he was described to me, he is tall and dark, with restless eyes, and beautiful curling hair."

This short description of a lover at first sight would have been given in extenso but for a knock at the outer door. It was a gyp with a letter for Leonard; and, when he had read it, he sighed, and said:

"The young gentleman in question—he has no title—is coming to breakfast with us to-morrow at his own invitation."

Leonard gave in to the passionate entreaty of his friend to be introduced to Constance, in consideration of his altered circumstances, and of the sturdy behaviour which he believed to have induced them. Gray was sincerely pleased to hear of his independence, but his hope was that, through this meeting, the charm which seemed to have enthralled both boy and girl would be dissolved, by each finding out something distasteful in the other. They were as dissimilar as any two young beings could be; the one proud, impetuous, and brilliant, and the other serene and sensible.

Love, however, who takes delight in setting at naught the calculations of the prudent, decreed that its first impression should be confirmed. Before the six days of Constance's proposed visit were over, the young couple were as good as engaged. With no father to talk of finance, and no mother to investigate genealogy, it was not a difficult business. The six days were prolonged to a fortnight.

"But, my friend," Gray said, "you must work. I have no marriage portion worth mentioning to give my sister."

And he was firm against Brooke Persey's

desire to marry immediately, and to put his trust in Providence; and Constance went back to her cottage home at Audley End, making up her mind, as the young ladies say, to a very long engagement.

The lover vacated his apartment the next term for one more suitable to his new position, beneath the attic of his friend, and set himself resolutely to his college duties. Leonard was trying for a fellowship, and Brooke for a scholarship. Both failed.

Gray, indeed, was not eminent either in classics or mathematics; although he took a good double degree. Persey had still too many expensive acquaintances, whom he wanted firmness to utterly shake off; too much liking for the pianoforte, and too much trust in cramming and extempore genius. His three letters, and one ride a-week to the little cottage at Audley End, did not help him; neither did his morbid thoughts upon his altered condition. He could not master himself sufficiently to forget the splendours and comforts of Hilton Hall, despite its accompanying servitude. He hankered after the flesh-pots, notwithstanding the Egyptian bondage. Living with what he considered exemplary economy, he far exceeded his income while he remained at college; and although the proceeds of his furniture and the sale of his two horses—which Sir William would not hear of receiving back—amply covered that expense, there seemed no great likelihood of his making both ends meet for the future.

Leonard had been readily appointed one of the assistant masters at the High School of Chilton, through the recommendation of his tutor; but Brooke, although by no means a bad scholar, had no such influence, even had he been inclined for a like position; the other alternative of wise old Doctor Wild he would not take:

Into some country village
Now I must go,
Where neither tithe nor tillage
The greedy patron
And parched matron
Swear to the church they owe;

Yet, if I can preach and pray too on a sudden,
And confute the pope at adventure, without studying,
Then ten pounds a-year, besides a Sunday pudding:
Alas! poor scholar! whither wilt thou go?

Brooke decided upon authorship. He published, on leaving college, an unfinished poem of some merit, but great bitterness, entitled *DEPENDENCE, A SATIRE*, and it had a little success—that is to say, for a poem. A considerable number of copies were bought by his college friends, a score of them sent to the reviews, and a good many given away.

One of these, in red morocco, was sent to Constance Gray, we may be sure, with an extra sonnet, by way of dedication, in the poet's own hand-writing; and one of them, through the intervention of a good-natured friend, got down to Hilton, and was regarded by the fierce old Baronet as a personal lam-

poon; which, despite appearances, it was never meant to be. No letter nor the slightest communication had been received from Sir William, since the interview in Brooke's rooms, save a deed, which had been forwarded by the family lawyer, securing to him his hundred and fifty pounds for life. The gap seemed never likely to be healed.

From Granta the poet removed to lodgings in town, and sat himself down in a more systematic method than might have been expected to his new work. He gave up, in the first place, writing verses, having soon discovered that, even in the happy chance of an editor printing them, poetry, like virtue, was its own reward. He concocted, principally, strange weird-like tales, enough to frighten the very printers' devils; but Editor "declined" them "with thanks." He then tried those smaller deer with illustrations, which have such incredible circulations at one and fourpence a-piece, with a reduction when bought by the dozen. In these he generally succeeded. Under the name of the Modern Brutus, he produced one or two startling sketches of our social system. With the exception, however, of one pound fourteen and sixpence in silver—brought in an envelope by an editor himself, for fear of accidents—he received nothing for his services. It was something indeed, to be puffed and placarded in staring colours at railway stations and steamboat piers, but still it was not enough to marry on. The letters to the little cottage grew shorter and rarer; their phrases began to have a warmed-up character. The charming little notes in answer, were suffered to remain unopened for hours; and, when read, they lay about the table unsealed. Squarish envelopes with vulgar wafer-seals, seemed, on the other hand, to possess an increasing interest. These he answered sometimes on the instant, and always with great pains. His constant visits to all places of amusement,—for professional purposes, Brooke declared, in order to make articles out of them—dipped considerably into his scanty purse; his extravagant habits were, generally, little changed, and, in short, neither love nor money were now in great abundance with him. For all these misfortunes he did not become less proud, and was boastful enough, poor fellow, upon what few hits he made; nay, when Leonard Gray, in the course of a few years, was elected head-master of Chilton, and had it in his power to offer Brooke the position he had himself quitted, the proposal was rejected rather scornfully.

One day, a long tale of his, in which, as he thought, he had put forth his best powers, came back to his lodgings from a magazine-office, rejected. It was the drop that filled his cup of bitterness to the brim; and, at night, he left the house, and strode out into the roaring streets, with rage at his heart. Although he had taken Nil Despe-

randum as his motto, he was not made of such persevering stuff as young authors should be, who would grow to be old ones. He had written anew after each failure, but he had written worse. Easily inspired, but quite as easily depressed, the encouragement he met with was small, and the snubs very many. As he waited a moment at a crossing, to let a string of cabs go by, the gas-light lit up his haggard face :

"Brooke, Brooke Persey," said a friendly, well-remembered voice ; "Why it is you, surely, though you are so white and thin? Come along with me, boy." And the good Parson Farmer of Hilton, who had first taken him out of the workhouse, led him with a gentle violence into his hotel. At first, in answer to manifold questions, Brooke enlarged upon the effect his genius had produced, rather than complained of its not having been recognised, but the unaffected kindness of his benefactor soon broke down the barriers of pride, and swept away all deceit before it.

"I do not succeed," he said, "in the least, and I do not now think I shall succeed, for I have neither heart nor head to write anything more," and before they parted, he confessed, "I am in debt, too ; and there is no one I can call my friend in all this town."

Quietly, and as if by accident, for the good clergyman knew the young man's character, Sir William and his circumstances became the topic of their talk ; he told how the kind-hearted baronet yet bewailed the estrangement of his adopted son, that though there was now a far distant cousin (a young lady) at the Hall, that he missed his namesake still ; how the bedroom Brooke used to occupy was never slept in, and the books he had studied in were never taken down ; moreover, how old age was creeping on apace, and that it was our duty to forget and to forgive. Believing himself swayed by these last reasons in particular, Brooke leapt at this chance of reconciliation, and Mr. Farmer promised to do all he could to bring it about.

Within a week from that night—spent by the young author in a flutter of hope—a new sort of letter came to his door, with arms upon the seal and words, if not of affection, yet of dignified forgiveness within ; within, too, was enclosed a cheque for more than two years' income. Alas, by the same post, also, one of those loving notes of Constance, urging him, not without tender complaint of his long silence, to patience and fresh endeavours. Brooke did not answer this last quite directly, but came down by the coach as soon as he had paid his bills, to Hilton.

It was early in the merry month of May when he reached the old lodge gates, and strode up the avenue. When the well-known prospect once more broke on him, a prophecy, such as that which greeted the Scotch Thane, seemed through the clear air to whisper, These shall be thine ! At the door

stood his ancient patron, grey enough now and bent, with a stick in his right hand, suspiciously like a crutch, and a young woman with hard eyes, and the haughty Persey forehead.

"My cousin Gertrude, Brooke ; you must love one another," said the baronet, sentimentously, after having embraced the prodigal. The young lady shook hands promptly, though without feeling, as though at the word of command.

It was a full week before the young man brought himself to understand that sentence as a matrimonial decree ; but by that time matters had gone too far to admit of any doubt of it. The lady and he were sent out on long walks together ; were seated next one another at table ; were continually spoken of by Sir William as his two children, whom he hoped to see, shortly, one. Gertrude Persey would have had no objection, notwithstanding her pride, to have married any human being for an adequate remuneration ; but to accept the adopted workhouse boy, seemed a bitter degradation. She hated him, as having supplanted her own family in the baronet's favour. Nevertheless, she was the first of the two to preface a remark, in one of their solitary rambles, with "When we are married, Brooke," &c. &c. She never by any accident called him Persey ; that being the one omission she permitted herself to make in her systematic observance of every whim and prejudice of her relative.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

In the meantime, Leonard Gray, the head master of Chilton High School, and Constance, his sister, dwelt in a quaint old brick mansion that had once formed part of a royal palace. The humorous questions he had been wont to ask of her in past times, concerning the bard, or the author, or the organ of public opinion, were now heard no more. In the evening, when the toils of the day were over, and they sat by the firelight there was little conversation. Night after night, indeed, she had said nothing, but remained with a book before her whose leaves were never turned, or shading her face with her hand, as though she could not bear to be looked upon. On a sudden, and without Brooke's name having been mentioned, Leonard observed, drily : "He is gone back again to Hilton, Constance."

"I knew it. I knew it must be so, poor fellow," she answered ; "I should have sent this before." She produced from her bosom a letter in her own hand-writing, and handed it to her brother to read. When he had done so, he rose quietly, kissed her on the forehead, and said :

"Right, right, dearest !" and took the letter with him into his own chamber. It contained a renunciation of her claim upon Persey's hand. "If, as I must believe," she wrote, "this chain is beginning to gall . . .

We have been both foolish, perhaps, and, if so I the most to blame." And so finished, with an expression of sisterly affection and good-will.

Leonard had his part to do. He was by nature of a friendly although firm disposition. His letter was more decided than that of Constance, openly hoping that the match which would have connected him and Brooke so closely would now be broken off; but he wrote it with sorrow and not harshness, and there was a lingering kindness towards his unhappy friend from the beginning to the close; the knowledge that his sister's happiness depended on what should come of this, alone made him stern.

He might have spared himself this delicacy, and Persey the humiliation which attended it, had he waited another day. The letters from the two houses crossed; one from Hilton Hall, enclosing another from Sir William, arrived the very next afternoon; Brooke's set forth that his marriage with Miss Gray was absolutely interdicted by his patron, and the baronet's contained a simple forbidding of the banns; passionate declarations of love, the coolest calculations of prudence, extenuations of himself, entreaties for pardon, complaints of too much having been expected of him, made up the strange sum of the young man's farewell.

"Pitiful!" Leonard exclaimed, when he had read it. "It is better so," sighed poor Constance, as she wept for the lover that was worse than dead. And it was better so. Her heart in time recovered from the first storming of its citadel. Perhaps, it was only the outer-works that were ever injured; for, in later years, she was beloved, if not so rapturously, yet far less selfishly, by another whom she married.

Brooke himself became the possessor of almost all the Persey lands—for Sir William died immediately after his marriage; to him and his heirs for ever he left the old Hall, and the park-land, and the corn-land, and the pastures towards the sea; but, alas! he never had a child to inherit them. He dwelt with his bitter, barren wife awhile, in grandeur and great wretchedness, and afterwards, when driven from his home by her sharp words, lived as hard as the Perseys of the olden time. Like more than one of them, too, he met his death in hunting—dragged at his horse's stirrup over his own fields, with his fine features not to be known by the most loving eyes, had there been such to look on him.

THE LOVE TEST.

I.

With a graceful step, and stately,
Proud of heart and proud of mien,
And her deep eyes shining greyly,
Cometh Lady Madeline,
Shuddering as with cold;
With cheek red-flush'd like daisy tip,
And full, ripe, pouting, ruby lip,
And hair of tawny gold.

Robes of changeful, silken lustre,
Drape her supple rounded limbs;
Where the loveliest maidens muster,
She their beauty pales and dims
By her surpassing grace.
Gleam rich strung pearls amidst her hair,—
You shall not see a form more fair,
Or a more radiant face.

Yet in her bosom lurks some anger,
Mask'd and gloss'd with sunny smiles;
From her grey-green eyes a danger
Looketh out, despite her wiles,
Subtle and cruelly.
Though of beauty fresh and youthful,
Seeming gay and seeming truthful,
Full of guile is she.

Her quick eyes glancing hither, thither,
With a spark of baleful fire,
And a wish that fain would wither,
What she hates with burning ire,
Goes she up the Hall.
Serpent-like, with smooth, soft gliding,
In and out the gay crowd sliding,
With slow, unheard footfall.

Comes she to a window shrouded
By a crimson curtain's sweep—
All her face grows dark and clouded
As her very heart could weep
Red tears of bitter blood.
And listening, she draws her breath,
In short quick gasps, as if her death
Drew near her where she stood.

By the crimson shadow hidden,
Sitteth gentle Lady Claire;
Blushes tint her cheek unbidden,
She is young and very fair,
With eyes of loving light;
And tresses dusk as midnight water,
Rippled into lines of lustre
By the clear starlight.

Her smile a tender April shining,
After rain upon May-bloom;
The wreath of lilies, loosely twining
Amidst the waved and shimmering gloom
That lies above her brow,
Is not more pure and sweet than she.—
So whispers one who on his knee
Voweth his simple vow.

Lips apart, and forward bending
As she fain would drain their life;
Every love-tone poison blending
With her vain and secret strife,
Standeth Lady Madeline:
Fingers clenched and bosom heaving,
All her dearest hope bereaving
Of their rich golden sheen.

Every soft, kind word she heareth
Falls upon her thirsty heart,
Like a flake of fire that seareth
All its nobler, better part;
Her soul is full of hate.
She goes away—she leaves them there,
Smiling, and not a tint less fair,
With eyes that glare like Fate.

II.

"Cousin, pray how speeds your wooing?"
 Laughing, ask'd bright Madeline;
 "Love hath oft been man's undoing—
 Cousin, 'twill be yours, I ween,
 I trust not Lady Claire.
 True, she is made of sweet device,
 But *love* thee!—she hath heart of ice,
 Although she be so fair!

"I could count upon my fingers
 Of her lovers half a score!
 Never long with one she lingers;
 Always she hath two or more,
 Although she is so meek!
 Thou wilt serve to please her leisure,
 She is kind beyond all measure,
 Blushing through her cheek!"

Rose the scarlet to his bronzed brow,
 In a quick and burning tide;
 From his lip a curse was breathed low,
 Words of ire and shamed pride,
 Against the Lady Claire.
 Changed his love to hatred wrathful—
 He had deem'd her far more faithful
 Ev'n than she was fair.

III.

O'er the glaring, sultry noontide
 Comes a shade of fear and woe;
 Steamy mists down every hill-side
 Creep with fever-breathings slow:
 The pest is in the town!
 Every face grows pale with sorrow;
 Every soul looks on the morrow,
 As no more its own!

In her chamber, closed and darken'd,
 As she fain would bar out Death,
 Lady Madeline has harken'd
 With a hush'd and silent breath
 To her damsel's tale:
 "Each man flieth from his neighbour,
 Shunn'd are friends, and ceased is labour
 All throughout the dale!"

Many days they two together
 Lived within that perfumed room;
 All the light, and sun, and weather
 Hidden from its shrinking gloom;
 List'ning to the Bell,
 Whose throbbing, long, continuous chime,
 Told who pass'd away from Time—
 To Heaven or to Hell!

While the awful pest was reaping
 Its black harvest in the town,
 Rose a cry of bitter weeping
 For one sudden stricken down
 In all his strength and pride.
 Fled his servants from his presence,
 Leaving with him death and silence
 Whate'er might betide.

Glow'd the summer in the woodlands,
 Hot and feverish, dry and bright;
 Died the heather on the moorlands,
 Crisp'd and wither'd in one night,
 By some foul poison-blast;
 In the gardens flowers lay,
 Changing into brown decay,
 As the blight went past.

In the air a heated humming
 As of noisy summer-fly,
 And the deep and anger'd booming
 Of the bee that flitteth by
 To its honey'd hive;
 The busy wasp, the stinging gnat,
 The slow and stealthy creeping cat,
 Alone appear to thrive.

Not a breath upon the heather,
 Not a cloud in all the sky,
 Not a tone would lift a feather
 From the grass all scorched and dry;
 Not a bird on wing;
 The dew, the mists forget to weep;
 The day itself seems half asleep,
 Burnt up the fairy ring.

Pours the noon through every window,
 Where he lies upon his bed—
 Glare and stillness—not a shadow
 E'en to fall upon his head;
 Untended, all alone;
 Thirsting for a drop of water;
 Writhing in his helpless torture;
 Friends and followers gone.

All his face is dark with anger,
 Dark with sorrow more than pain—
 There he lies, like any stranger,
 Left to call, and call in vain,
 For some familiar hand.
 With a black and troubled eye
 Turns he on his face to die,
 Gone all his hireling band.

From his lip a troubled prayer
 Oozes painfully and slow;
 Murmuring through the heavy air,
 Sadly tremulous and low,
 Full of great despair.
 List!—a swift step on the floor,
 One faithful heart is at the door—
 It is the Lady Claire!

Falls her soft hand like a blessing
 On his hot and fever'd brow;
 Her voice is gentle and caressing
 In its words, so kind and low:—
 "O Bertram, thou must live
 For I am thine, and thou art mine!
 By all the summer suns that shine,
 My life for thine I'd give!"

Like a pleasant, shaded silence
 To the sultry heat of noon,
 Is her quiet, loving presence,
 Tender, soothing, kind and boon.
 "Is this the heart of ice?
 O! thou art good beyond all measure,
 My hope, my joy, my sweetest treasure,
 Love's faithfullest device!

"Wake I now, or am I dreaming.
 Have I learnt thy own true worth?
 Art thou but a vision gleaming
 Through my last dark hours of earth,
 Or art thou Lady Claire?
 Lay thy hand upon my hand—
 She is the fairest in the land—
 O, she is winsome fair!

"Who told me she was false and fleeting,
Changeful, cruel, cold and kind?
Methinks she is the sweetest sweetening
Ever wilful man could find:
I love her as my life!
Lay thy lips upon my lips—
Cool, dewy-fresh as daisy tips,
With honey'd softness rife!

"From thy kiss new life came stealing
Through my chill'd and fainting soul:
It hath been a dear revealing,
That thou givest nobly dole
Of thy young maiden love
To every idle, passing whim;
Thou art pure as thou dost seem,
And true as God above!"

Death and Lady Claire sit watching,
Many days within that room;
Every changed expression catching,
She in faith, and he in gloom,
That fits o'er Bertram's face:
Through the long and ghastly midnight,
Through the dim and haunted twilight
Of that deserted place.

Comes across the hills a moaning,
As of rising western breeze;
Comes a heavy rain at gloaming
O'er the long becalmed seas—
A cold and healthy breath.
He sinks into a quiet rest,
Dreaming of her who loves him best,
For him had dared her death!

IV.

Through the wood-walks, o'er the meadows,
Swells a full and gladsome chime;
In her chamber's perfumed shadows,
All that blithe and happy time,
Stays Lady Madeline:
She is sick, and grieved and wrathful;
Sore at heart, yet proud and scornful,
As ever she hath been.

Yet seems she gay: she hath been singing
An ancient song of love and hate,
But, through all, that tuneful ringing
Smites her like a lonesome fate,
Saying, "He loveth Claire;
Thou art forgot, he heeds thee not;
He weddeth Claire, thou art forgot—
He loveth Lady Claire!"

She sees the maidens scatter flowers
Before the gentle, modest bride;
She notes the stately form that towers,
So grand, yet loving, at her side,
Then weeps with rage and shame;
"O, they will laugh my love to scorn!
I would that I had ne'er been born,
Or died ere Bertram came!"

V.

In cloister dim dwells Madeline,
Chafing and fretful, never still;
With robe of serge for silken shewn;
With cross, and coif, and gloomy veil;
Wearing her soul away.
With weak repining, weaker tears,
Go on her clouded, sinful years,
From weary day to day!

In Harden Hall dwells Lady Claire,
With frolic children round her knee;
Still meek her face, and still most fair,
From every shade of sorrow free;
A true and tender wife,
Worn in her husband's inner heart,
Its kindest, dearest, holiest part,
His very life of life!

ECONOMIC BOTANY.

BREAKING the ice is a favourite expression, applicable both to national progress in general, and to the state of advancement of any particular branch of practical knowledge. Thus, in Turkey—to take first the case of a nation—the ice is not yet broken, as far as civilising improvement is concerned, so long as women are precluded from giving it a helping hand, and so long as the common people stoutly believe that those unclean packs of Christian dogs—the allied armies of England and France—were compelled to come and fight the Russians, because the Commander of the Faithful, the Sultan, ordered them, as tributaries and vassals, to do so. To instance next the case of a science, in Economic Botany, that is botany applied to household service, the ice was not yet broken when the origin of valuable spices and drugs was as mysteriously shrouded as the site of the gardens of the Hesperides; when truth and error were so closely dovetailed that it was difficult to detect their line of junction; when Sierra Leone—a country so fertile that oranges, figs, and citrons grew almost without any culture—produced, also the oyster-tree, which bears no other fruit but oysters, though it has a very broad leaf almost as thick as leather, having small knobs like those of the cypress. The boughs hang a good way into the water, and are overflowed by the tide; on the mud and slush that sticks to them, the young oysters bred there fasten, and that in such vast numbers that one can hardly see anything almost but long ropes of oysters. A mangrove brought home, then, and kept in a hothouse, might have been expected to bear a crop of shell-fish. The ice was not broken when camphor was thought to be a mineral, and was learnedly styled by Kentman, "bitumen odoratum;" when Cimbulon Island produced a tree whose leaves, as soon as they fell to the ground, moved from place to place as if they were alive (which those leaf-animals really were), springing away when touched, and surviving for eight days kept in a desk; when a poor innocent fern with a woolly rhizoma (something like the hare's-foot fern on a large scale), was calumniated as a Boranez or Scythian lamb-plant, "because it resembles a lamb in shape, and consumes the herbs within its reach, and as far as the stalk reaches; it changes its place in growing, and wheresoever it turns the grass withers." While double cocoa-nuts were believed to grow in submarine palm

forests, and one of them would purchase a ship's cargo, as being an infallible antidote to disease or poison, the ice was anything but broken. The economical employment of vegetable productions was then as difficult as to make a sailing vessel advance through a hard-frozen sea. It is easy enough, now, to walk into a shop, and ask for an ounce of gum-arabic, a box of quinine pills, or a quarter of a pound of cinnamon and mace; but the shopkeepers, and the people who supply them, have not always found it so easy to obtain their supply. With some articles it is far from easy still. The ice is broken, and that is all—it is not quite melted. The adventurer in search of woods, and gums, and drugs, and dyes, still finds his sloop bumped against and retarded by floating lumps of drift-ice, in the shape of error and prejudice, often thickly packed over the whole surface of the waters he is navigating.

Hitherto, Economic Botany has been totally neglected as a branch of popular education. Nevertheless, young gentlemen destined to travel, who have had it birched into them that the nymph Daphne was metamorphosed into a laurel, and that the pheasant's-eye flower sprung from the blood of Adonis, would find it just as useful to be able to recognise the foliage of the teak and mahogany-trees, the berry of the coffee, or the stem of the Peruvian bark. Even with regard to articles in common use, such ignorance is widely spread, blinding the eyes of the people with a thick veil. They believe that capers grow in English gardens, and that a shrub with trailing branches and red berries is the tea-plant. Hundreds and thousands of inveterate smokers and snuffers might be led through fields planted with tobacco without guessing what the crop was. Do you, candid reader, know madder, tealzel, liquorice, and colza when you see them, although your daily clothing and drink, and even your nightly light, may be furnished through their agency? Can you tell, by sight, the difference between flax, hemp, and gold-of-pleasure, as they grow? If you cannot, you will still hardly credit that English farmers, within these last few years, have thrown down fine crops of flax, as litter for their live-stock, through the difficulty of getting it properly managed and manipulated into fibre! Other farmers have grown, for textile purposes, the gold-of-pleasure—a plant whose seeds yield oil, and whose stalks make brooms, but which can no more furnish thread than a bunch of brittle reeds can! And yet a little book on flax and hemp has been insolently sneered at by an agricultural journal, because the continental culture and processes, instead of the English, are therein taught!

The source of many vegetable productions—the subjects of Economic Botany—is confined within a limited circle by local peculiarities of depth or quality of soil, of moisture or temperature of climate. In such cases, it

is of little use to kick against the pricks, and to fight against nature. But often the restricted produce occurs merely because the knowledge and practice of that special culture is traditional on the spot, handed down from father to son, from mother to daughter, and learned by the children of successive generations, with as little effort as the art of cutting bread-and-butter, or eating soup. The same crop is often unknown in other districts, simply because of the dislike to novelties entertained by rustics. A rural population is like an old dog; you cannot teach it new tricks. Flax culture and manipulation, for instance, if we would adopt it as practised in Flanders and the north of France, would give bread to thousands of our labourers otherwise starving, and would keep our union-houses half empty in winter. On the other hand, French peasants have their prejudices too; they won't eat parsnips, any more than ours will swallow sorrel-soup; and they plant, rear, and train their roadside elms to insure an unhealthy tree and a rotten heart, with an obstinacy that would do credit to martyrdom. They, like us, have gone on in the same wheel-rut, for want of observing better modes. One foreign mode we might advantageously copy,—that labourers should learn two trades instead of one; for instance, a man who cultivates flowers and fruit-trees during their season, will turn sabotier, or wooden-shoemaker, while the ground is bound hard and fast with frost and snow; a ploughman, or turf-cutter, or harvest-man, will earn a certain livelihood by flax-scutching when the days are grown short and the nights are long; a letter-carrier all the morning and evening, will be a tailor or a shoemaker from ten till four. But, in the smaller branches of economic botany, England has gone backwards almost as far as she has advanced in horticulture. The high war and protection prices caused several valuable crops to yield their place to wheat; and, when a generation of skilled labourers has passed away without transmitting their art to their descendants, it is far from easy to create another.

Look at saffron. We have Saffron Walden on the map of England, and saffron buns in the confectioners' shops; saffron is also to be bought at the druggist's. We know that saffron is the pistil, or central filament, which hangs, like a cloven serpent's-tongue, from the mouth of a species of crocus; but we do not often see it growing, even in gardens, as a choice curiosity. Neither may we confound it with colchicum, or meadow-saffron, a poisonous plant. The crocus sativus, a bulbous flower, cultivated solely for its aromatic stigmas, thrives in the central departments of France in light, deep, rich, well-drained land, which it occupies for three successive seasons; after that, the soil is so exhausted as to need rest, from saffron, for seven, fifteen, or twenty years. When the ground has been thoroughly prepared, in

June or July, the workman opens with his spade a straight trench some seven inches deep. It must not be less, because the roots rise annually the height of their own thickness. He is followed by a woman, or a child, who puts the bulbs in the trench an inch apart from each other. He then opens another trench, six inches from the first, shovelling the earth into the former one, and so on till the field is complete. Practice makes his work so perfect that the rows of flowers, though drawn by the eye alone, come up as regularly as if they were planted by line. After a warm September shower, the blossoms start up like regiments of light purple Jacks-in-the-box; every morning the saffron-fields are covered with a fresh carpet. The cultivators have no rest either by night or day; and it will happen that, in spite of all their industry, they lose a portion of their crop. And this work lasts three weeks or a month. At daybreak, and before the dew is gone, the saffron-gatherers, mostly women, speed to the fields with small baskets and large hampers, each furnished with handles. They set their feet on either side of the rows of saffron, and gather the flowers by breaking them off with a clever twist just below the cup of the blossom, to make sure of the pistil as well as the petals. When the right hand is full, it is emptied into the basket held in the left hand; the baskets-full are emptied into the hampers; the hampers-full are carried to the house. The saffron-girls ply their task with such rapidity, that the eye can scarcely follow the hand of a skilful gatheress.

In the house, another set of workwomen are busy, seated before large tables on which the flowers are spread, each with a plate on her right hand. One by one the flowers are picked, their tube broken, the stigmas seized and tossed into the plate. A clever picker will produce a pound of crude saffron at the end of her day's work. But, though the labour is light, it is not exactly plain sailing. The odour of saffron affects many persons with drowsiness and fainting-fits. Even in the open air, the gatherers are frequently attacked by the overpowering influence of the perfume given out; while the women who separate the pistil from the petal of the flowers are obliged to keep up a strong current of air in the room where they are at work, and even then are often compelled to leave their task, and recover themselves in the open air. As the saffron is picked, it is dried over a charcoal fire, in earthen vessels or in sieves, according to the local custom, by the master or the mistress themselves, who dare not trust so delicate and dangerous an operation to stranger hands. When the blossoms are over, the growth of the leaves has to be encouraged and protected. If cattle or sheep are suffered to eat them, it is all over with next year's flowers. Even hares and rabbits are forbidden to indulge

their appetite for the grass of saffron, which, after remaining green all winter, withers naturally towards the end of May. We should not be living in civilised Europe, if saffron were not adulterated. Some peasants increase the bulk of their harvest by the aid of *Carthamus*, or bastard saffron. Most of them put it into a cellar, to increase its weight, before selling it to the wholesale dealer. What the wholesale dealer does, is best known to himself; but the consumer is sometimes supplied with a rotten sample.

Saffron is a drug now struggling hard for life against *décadence* and neglect. We have other vegetable medicines that have wrestled through even a tougher strife to save themselves from being burked and buried alive by selfish monopolists and sceptical physicians. Let us take quinine, or Peruvian bark, to illustrate the progress of Economic Botany. Kina-kina, or the bark of barks, is the native name which the Spaniards heard from the mouth of the South American aborigines; they wrote it *china-china*, while the French altered it to *quinquina*. In any case, the etymology of quinine is far easier to trace than the history of the substance itself. As authors relate that the Arab goats revealed to man the virtues of coffee by their fantastic bounds and gestures after browsing on the poetic berry, so, it would appear, we are indebted for a knowledge of the medicinal powers of Peruvian bark to the cure of sick animals who had drunk the water of a pond in which the trunks of kina-kina trees lay macerating. Other authorities, with manly pride, preferring to attribute so important a discovery to human agency, refer it to a feverish Indian, who was relieved in consequence of quenching his thirst by draughts of water similarly saturated with the principles of quinine. Another Indian, anonymous like the first, and in possession of the same secret, appears to have communicated it to a noble Spaniard, the Corregidor of Loxa, Don Juan Lopez de Cannizares, whom he thus cured of an intermittent fever. The Corregidor in turn gallantly employed the remedy at Lima, in sixteen hundred and thirty-eight, in rescuing from fever the Countess del Cinchon, the wife of the viceroy. The lady, on her return to Spain, loudly puffed the marvellous specific, which was called, after her, *Pulvis Comitissæ*, or the countess's powder; and her Latinised name, *Cinchona*, was consecrated to botanical nomenclature. During her stay in America, the grateful patient gratuitously distributed, to all who were suffering from fever in the viceroyalty of Lima, the remedy which had re-established her own health. So far, all went smoothly with Peruvian bark.

But, at her departure, she placed in the hands of the Jesuits who resided in the Spanish possessions, a certain provision of the medicament, in order that they might bring it into general use; from which circumstance it acquired the name of Jesuits'

powder, or Jesuits' bark. The reverend fathers prudently determined to turn the charitable intentions of the vicequeen of Lima, to a profitable commercial account. They enriched themselves by their mercantile dealings, but were very far from spreading the knowledge they had obtained through the generous confidence of the countess. Instead of accurately describing the tree whose mere cast-off clothes, they were selling at an enormous profit, they prevented competition in their lucrative business by refusing to furnish botanists with any precise data which might help them to distinguish, recognise, or class, the *Cinchona* plants. As the bark-trees were at first found only in the environs of Loxa, south of the equator, the Jesuits declared that they could not exist in other regions of America; or, if they did exist, that they could possess no febrifugal virtue beyond the province of Loxa. They got the pope to trace a line, which was called the Pope's line, on the map of America, beyond which no *Cinchona* might, should, or would grow. The Jesuits' agents and correspondents in Spain had received their orders; and the public, and even the government, were long made the dupes. "The commercial houses in Spain," says Humboldt, "who, for half a century had retained the monopoly of Loxa bark, tried hard to depreciate that of New Grenada and Southern Peru. They found complaisant botanists who, by raising varieties to the rank of species, proved that the barks of Peru were specifically different from those which grew round Santa Fé. Medical men followed the pope's example by drawing lines of demarcation on the map, and maintained that no effective bark could grow beyond a certain degree of latitude in the northern hemisphere. So great was the influence of this mercantile trick, that, at Cadiz, by a royal order, they burnt a large quantity of the best orange bark, gathered at the king's expense, while all the Spanish military hospitals were suffering from a scarcity of the precious drug. A portion of the bark devoted to the flames was secretly purchased at Cadiz by some English merchants, and sold in London at a very high price." Thus, for more than a century, Europe obtained Peruvian bark only through the medium of Spanish commerce directed by the Jesuits. The consequence was, that some doctors rejected it, because it was a nameless novelty, shrouded in mystery; while the English physicians would have nothing to do with a powder prepared by the diabolical art of the Jesuits, for the purpose of killing heretics, instead of curing them of fever. Nevertheless, the use of bark was spread in France by an Englishman, after whom it was called Talbot's Remedy, although scorned by the French faculty. The benefit derived from it by Louis the Fourteenth, was sufficient to bring it into fashion, although sold at enormous prices. The king purchased the

secret, for the laudable purpose of giving the public the benefit of it. To the utter astonishment of everybody, it turned out that the *Remède de l'Anglais* was nothing more than the powder of quin-quina administered in a way to ensure its activity.

Economic Botany also, helps us to speculate in luxuries. Thus, we all know the difficulty and disfavour which attended the introduction of tea and coffee; not to mention chocolate-seeds and their nibs or shells, cocoa (or properly cacao). All these excellent beverages are novelties; and there is no reason whatever to believe that they complete the list of exotic drinkables, leaving none remaining to be sipped and enjoyed by future drinkers. On the contrary, an eligible draught presents itself in the shape of Yerva de Paraguay, or Paraguay tea, prepared from the leaves and twigs of a South American tree, which yield a pleasant and exhilarating infusion. A maté, or calabash (which gives its title to the drink itself), serves as a teapot; the total contents being about the eighth of a pint. The infusion is highly refreshing when taken in the ordinary way; but it is occasionally mixed with milk. It has all the effects of tea, and probably contains the principle of theine, as well as the cocoa-leaf of Upper Peru. The notion of intoxicating qualities in yerva is fanciful. It will affect people of weak nerves, as strong tea does, but not otherwise. Chinese tea is carefully packed in leaf tin; that of Paraguay is enclosed in bags of dry hide, in large quantities. It is carried to Buenos Ayres, by land or river, twelve hundred miles. Some years back, M. Hervé, an artist, returning from Buenos Ayres, brought with him a sample of yerva, which was sold retail, on Ludgate Hill, for about four shillings per pound, and was much liked by many people. It is probable that, under favourable circumstances, it might be imported here at from about sixpence to ninepence per pound; and it would be a very useful addition to our stock of infusion-making materials. I should like to try the effects of maté, some stormy winter's night, with a good fire, the curtains close drawn, and a fresh stock of uncut periodicals on the table. Or, some bold unprejudiced queen of the drawing-room might create a sensation in the tea-drinking world, by inviting her friends to a maté party. Economic Botany helps us with the information that the famous Paraguay tea—almost as extensively used in South America as bohea is here—is no true tea, but a kind of holly, as its scientific name, *Ilex Paraguensis*, implies. Economic Botany tells us whither to send for it, presents us with a woodcut of the foliage, and exhibits to us maté cups and tubes, used in drinking the infusion.

Not quite ten years since, it occurred to the director of the Royal Botanic Gardens of Kew, that a brick structure, vacated there, might be made a place of deposit for all kinds

of useful and curious vegetable products, which neither the living plants of the garden nor the specimens in the Herbarium could exhibit. Such a collection promised to render great service to the manufacturer, the druggist, the dyer, the weaver, the cabinet-maker, and to artisans of every description. Here they might find what hitherto they had often sought in vain—at least a truthful clue to, and some reliable information respecting, the raw materials used or useable in their respective trades, correctly named, and accompanied by some account of their history, origin, and native country. The useful hint was carried out, and the country now possesses an admirable, though still adolescent Museum of Economic Botany. Complete it never can be, until all the vegetable treasures of the globe are thoroughly ransacked, and are applied to every purpose of which they are capable.

Such a museum is, in principle, a standing armed manifestation against the aggressions and intolerance of all sorts of selfish mystification and humbug. Join the crowd who throng the rooms any summer's afternoon, and you will see whether or no the public sympathise with the resolve to make the results of botanical study available to all the world. Quackery is here delightfully unveiled. Where—oh where!—are the Revalenta estates on which grows the *Revalenta Arabica*? Alas! they have been absorbed and annexed to the territories of John Barleycorn and Jean Raisin. Wherever will grow the *Ervum lens*, a plant which furnishes lentil meal or flour of lentils, there are the *Revalenta* estates! Enormous monopolies in certain materials and drugs have long been sustained by the concealment of the plants from which they are derived. Instances will occur to every one connected with arts and manufactures. It is desirable for the public good, that such tricks of trade should be rendered impossible; and, in Sir William Hooker's museum, we have often the article produced labelled with a reference to its living secreter in the garden or the hot-houses. The visitor receives twofold gratification and redoubled instruction if, after his walk amidst the plants, with their several vegetable forms freshly imprinted on his mind, he can enter an adjacent building, contemplate their products, and see the uses which man derives from them.

To begin with an instance of manifold utility, you may inspect with your own proper eyes the food and raiment, the milk, the oil, the toddy, the cups and bowls, the cordage, brushes, mats—in short, the three hundred and fifty-six articles—as many as there are days in the year—afforded by the common cocoa-nut tree. It is difficult to say what it does not afford.

“The Indian nut alone

Is clothing, meat and trencher, drink and pan,
Boat, cable, sail and needle, all in one.”

You learn that the *Larix Europæa* furnishes Venice turpentine; the *Abies excelsa*, Burgundy pitch; and the *Pinus palustris*, American turpentine. About gum Arabic, if you are likely to travel in the East, you may possibly help us to further information. For your guidance you had better look at the samples, from various species of acacia, no doubt, but of which the source has probably in few instances, save where there are names attached, been correctly traced as derived from *Acacia Arabica*. The several specimens of gum resins, *Animi* and *Copals*, the origin of which is not known, are so many advertisements entreating you to help them to find their next of kin. Your kind assistance is also requested to discover the outward semblance of the trees which cut up well into ornamental woods, and die worth a deal of money. Other disconsolates in search of relatives are the gamboges, valuable to painters and pill-makers. Droll, that patent medicines from unidentified trees should decorate our interiors with brilliant yellow! Pipe or Siam gamboge is supposed to be derived from *Garcinia Cochinchinensis*; lump gamboge, from Ceylon, is said to drop from *Gambogia Gutta*. A more intimate acquaintance with the gamboge family is manifestly desirable, seeing that several of its members, as the Mangosteen, bear fruit reckoned by travellers the most delicious in the world, and worth the journey from England to the Malay Archipelago to taste them, unless his Grace of Northumberland will save you the trouble by asking you to favour him with a call at Sion. But, doubt and uncertainty are the exceptions here—precise information is the leading principle. Lo! the Chinese grass-plant (from which you have the fibre or raw material, and the manufactured cloth displayed) is no grass, but in reality a nettle. The wood of which cedar pencils are made is not cedar, but *Juniperus Bermudiana*, and frequently *J. Virginiana*. That powerful and much-abused perfume, the essential oil of bergamot, does not come from the odoriferous-leaved herbaceous plant so common in rustic gardens, but from the pear-shaped fruit of the bergamot orange, *Citrus Bergamia*, whose fragrant rind is often made into boxes. Would you believe that syrup of capillaire is prepared from hair? It is, though—that is, from maiden-hair fern. Crab oil comes from no crustacean living, but from the seeds of *Cazapa Guianensis*. It burns well, but the Indians smear their persons with it, as its excessive bitterness repels insects. (Mem.: to store your travelling dressing-case with a bottle-full.) The beautiful substance called Chinese rice-paper is under no obligations whatever to rice, being the exquisite pith of a new plant of the ivy family, *Aralia papyrifera*, only found in Formosa, for the knowledge, and for living plants of which, we are mainly indebted to Sir John Bowring. What a cunning mis-

leader is the name Chinese rice-paper, half true and half false—good for the China, but bad for the rice. The last-mentioned discovery is only one of the many instances of the origin and history of commercial vegetable products, of which we should yet have remained in utter ignorance but for the formation of this garden and the museum.

The Doum Palm of Upper Egypt, remarkable for its singularly forked stems—other palms have unbranched stems—resembles that respected animal Saint Martin's donkey, by gratuitously presenting us with ginger-breads. The thought of gingerbread reminds us that the gentry of Madeira and Rio Janeiro indulge in tooth-picks of orange-tree wood, extending the use of the same to walking-canes, both which are displayed for our admiration. Picture to yourself a village urchin caught robbing an orange orchard, and receiving his punishment in the shape of whacks from a portion of the tree of evil!

Messrs. Fortnum and Mason, by their collection of preserved fruits, make one envy the young hero who, while he sate in a corner, had full liberty to put in his thumb and pull out a plum. But when maid-servants or pages are incorrigible in tasting the jam and honey with their fingers, strong-minded mistresses often cure them by mixing therewith a dust of jalap; accordingly, for our rescue from temptation here we are indebted to a religious sect in the United States, denominated the United Society, or more commonly, the Shakers. They have sent an extensive collection of their native and cultivated herbs, compressed into oblong cakes; which preparations are highly valued throughout the States, and constitute a great export trade. Do we ever swallow, without knowing it, anything made from these vegetable cakes? Ignorance, perhaps, is bliss. By the way, frugal housewives in Sumatra use prepared coffee-leaves instead of the berry; they really do contain caffeine, and make a drink that is better than no coffee at all. One would think that the great object in knowing *Cocculus Indicus*, or Indian berries, by sight, would be to avoid them; but we don't avoid them. Two thousand three hundred and fifty-nine bags, each of one hundredweight, are annually imported. What for? Cola-nuts, from the west coast of Africa, have a pleasant, bitter taste, and are much esteemed by the negroes as promoting digestion; they also prevent sleep, and are used by the native watchmen to keep themselves awake. These nuts are likely to come into general use on occasions which it is needless to specify. Finally, we have vegetable bellows made of the leaves of a tree, besides lace-trees, wax-trees, sack-trees, and cow-trees. There are even drum-trees.

The happy Hookerian idea received a great development, first from our Crystal Palace Exhibition and still more from the Paris

Exposition last year. At the breaking up of the former, the museum received numerous additions; amongst others, the noble collection of Scottish agricultural products, formed at a vast expense by Messrs. Peter Lawson and Company, of Edinburgh. At Paris, one of the leading features were the trophies, combining the productions of a country into one artistic group. Thus, the Low Countries built a trophy of native and colonial produce on a pedestal of ornamental bamboo-work. By far the most interesting of these were the collections and the trophies from Algeria. If England only had a colony like Algeria, no further from her shores than the breadth of the Mediterranean! That Algeria should scarcely be better known to Englishmen than the *Mare Mortuum* in the moon! The multitude of the objects thence derived precludes all attempt at selection. There were models in wax of the fruits of Algeria: *Le vaquois*, *Pandanus odoratissimus*; the bread-fruit, *Artocarpus integrifolia*; the anatomy and mode of germination of the cocoa-nut, life-size. There were black pepper, tamarinds, China guava, Savannah guava, *psidium pomiferum*, and cloves; quinces, almonds, cones of the *Araucaria excelsa*, aubergines, or the edible fruits of egg-plants, in varieties, tobacco, fruits of opuntias, or prickly pears, in varieties, madder-roots like worn-out whip-thongs, cotton, glorious onions, Madagascar bamboos grown at Bône, plums, apples (including a quite white apple, the *pomme d'Astracan*), sweet potatoes, pears, and pastèques, or water-melons, grown with and without irrigation. Other products of Algeria were, paste for paper-making, from sundry native textile plants; bullrush leaves, rubbed and bruised so as to show their fibres, one leaf making quite a web; *Phormium tenax*, or New Zealand flax; paper made with indigenous textile plants without the slightest mixture of rags; dyers' carthamus; Chinese rice, from the government nursery at Bône; various grains; the *Caladium esculentum* of Jamaica; lentils, sorghos, and silk; cloth made of the fibres of *Musa textilis*; all sorts of maize; an edible lichen, *Lecanora esculenta*, and grey flour obtained from the same; the wood of the Algerian cork-tree, polished; *Thuya articulata*, a beautiful wood, giving a resin called sandarake, with dried specimens of the foliage. Very instructive objects were woods for building and other purposes, exhibited with the bark on.

But, the great point is, that many of these things are now our own to enjoy and study, as will be seen from Sir William Hooker's report. "The Museum had already become, even before the close of eighteen hundred and fifty-four, inconveniently crowded by the accession of new contributions, and a considerable amount of them had to be temporarily accommodated in the temples and in sheds. A vote for an addi-

tional museum was therefore submitted to and sanctioned by Parliament. An additional opportunity of acquiring valuable collections was afforded last summer, when I was summoned by the French Imperial Commission to take an active part in the jury of the second class at the great Paris Exhibition. That class, mainly relating to vegetable products, offered the very objects most requisite to enrich our collection. A grant of two hundred pounds was accordingly obtained from the Treasury, to be expended in procuring such articles as were most important to the Kew Museum, while the president of the Board of Trade liberally offered to expend an equal amount. Thus provided, and further assisted by the several officers of the Science and Art Department of the Board then in Paris, and enriched by numerous donations from many exhibitors, forty-eight large cases were transmitted to Kew. They contained vegetable products, many of them very rare and valuable, from Algeria, Australia, Austria, the East Indies, France, the Grand Duchy of Hesse, Jamaica, Mauritius, Norway, Prussia, Sardinia, Sweden, Tuscany, the United States, Tasmania, Victoria, Wurttemberg, and other places. All have arrived in safety, and their contents will go far towards filling up the surplus space in the new museum.

"To say that this collection of vegetable products is unrivalled, is saying little, and no more than might have been asserted while the museum was quite in its infancy, since nothing of the same instructive kind had ever been attempted. Ours is the gratification of having set the example, which is now being followed in several of our colonies, Jamaica, Demerara, Melbourne, &c. The East India Company is forming a similar museum in London, at Calcutta, and at Madras; another has been attached to the Botanic Garden of Edinburgh, and a Museum of Applied Science has been recently founded at Liverpool."

One fact must not be omitted. The total number of visitors to Kew last year was three hundred and eighteen thousand, eight hundred and eighteen; their conduct is described as being the subject of great satisfaction. Indeed, such acts of impropriety as are occasionally committed are plainly described as belonging more frequently to the well-dressed than to the lower classes.

A SUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

Nobody who ever experienced them can forget the broiling days for which the islands of the Mediterranean are famous. Whether it is that their soil is generally bare and rocky, and thus reflects the heat in an intense degree, or from some other cause, there is no doubt of the fact that an August sun in any of these numerous floating paradises, from the kingdom-like Majorca to the shirt-stud-

looking Capri, is fiercer, hotter, more intolerable than it is ever found on the mainland. The very waters flowing into those creeks and bays add to the warmth, as if the great sea had been long upon the boil, and poured its hissing contents into the crevices of the shore. But, when twilight comes, when the first sound of the rising breeze is heard among the olives—when the sky ceases to be unendurable to the eye, and a soft veil gradually envelopes its expanse, making its blue more deep, and showing the faint, white stars in its upper portion, while its skirts are still bright with the last rays of the sun—then, all of a sudden, the spell that seems to keep man and bird and beast immovable, is removed, and voices are heard in all the little gardens along the coast; boats flit ghost-like—but filled with music—from point to point. As night comes on darker and darker, but never so dark in that region of pellucid atmosphere as we experience in the north,—greater and greater grow the life and motion, till when the midnight hour is sounded from the distant church-tower, the gay assemblages, uniting from the different retreats where they have spent their evening, take their homeward way to the city, mingling their groups along the road, joining in choral songs, and forming a sort of irregular procession. It is very much the fashion to look upon all foreigners as undomestic, and therefore unaddicted to the home virtues. A family in an English village sits round the fire every month of the year, except from the end of August till the beginning of September, has the candles lighted at six or seven o'clock, tea brought in at eight, the children helped in their lessons and set for hours to torture the broken-winded piano in the school-room. The wife is busy looking over the clothes brought home from the wash, the husband is deep and sulky over yesterday's Times, the front-door is locked, the servants all silent in the kitchen; a visitor at that hour would frighten them out of their wits—an open-window would terrify them into consumption. They have it all to themselves, and get dreadfully tired of this invariable happiness by the time the clock strikes ten, and away they go to bed, to rise, perhaps, with a headache next morning; to see, certainly, either clouds or rain, and to make up their minds to go eight miles to a dull and formal dinner (for isn't it a pleasant neighbourhood and full of society?) to which they have been invited three weeks before, and for which they must give a return-entertainment in the course of two or three months.

But the French! but the Italians! O, they are an undomestic people. They have no idea of the sanctities of home—they neglect their wives—they deceive their husbands—they dislike their children—they have no Christianity,—no coal fires—no feelings of honour—no under-done roasts of beef. Ah,

John! how little you know of foreigners!—how little you know of yourself!

Some seventy years ago—a year or two is of no consequence—in one of those islands I have spoken of, a family party was assembled which it would have been impossible for the most morose and parochial-minded of Englishmen to behold without delight. It was in a vineyard, or an enclosed space of ground rejoicing in that name, but no longer deserving it by any of the fruits it contained; for the terraces, on which, in ancient days when it had been a dependency of a convent of Cordeliers, the vines were planted, step above step and hid the face of the steep escarped rock which formed the northern limit of the domain, had been turned to more ignoble use. They were planted with vegetables of a humble order; and over all the surface of the cliff were innumerable wild flowers of every shape and hue. The level expanse of the ground was laid out in close-cut grass, intersected with long, straight walks, while the trees and hedges which formed the boundaries were cut in fantastic shapes; great peacocks expanded their crests in yew; and an immense beech-dromedary showed by its double hump that Buffon had not been studied in vain. All was delightfully artificial as gardens and pleasure-grounds always ought to be. If you want unassisted nature, go where she is left alone,—if you want an imitation of nature or fictitious wildernesses, prepared irregularities, carefully planned negligences, you are quite welcome to your fancy, but I trust you will fill your dessert-dishes with wax-peaches and drink gooseberry-champagne. Everything in the little territory I describe bore evidence of the hand of man; there was gravel on the walks, there were steps to the declivities; the alleys were as much the work of the gardener as the bower, where the family sat, was of the carpenter. And the family was artificial, too. Tailors had made their clothes—milliners had made their dresses. And their bonnets—but they wore no bonnets. The mother and her three fair daughters trusted equally to the profusion of their long-flowing, dark-coloured locks; only on the head of the matron somebody had placed a wreath of white roses, which she wore as if it had been a coronet of gold, and with a look and a smile rewarded her husband for his attention, and rewarded him still more by the increase it gave to her beauty. The pair sat in the arbour above alluded to, and watched with delighted eyes the gambols of the merry boys and girls who formed themselves in graceful groups, or represented the statues they were acquainted with on the level green.

"Lina has the finest figure," said the husband.

"But Paola the most flexible face and exquisite attitude," said the mother. Then she added, addressing the young people,

"Geronymo of my heart, where is your brother Giuseppe?"

"O mamma!" said the boy addressed, and standing still in the position of the Apollo watching the fated arrow's deathful flight, "he is not in good humour to-day. Mucius Sævola got wrathful, and has wounded his head."

"Mucius Sævola has always his hand in the fire, my angel," said the husband, frowning. "He brings nothing but discomfort hither when he comes home."

"Giuseppe was wrong, depend on it," replied the wife. "Come hither, Giuseppe," she continued, as another boy, taller and stouter than the rest, entered the garden, and strolled up towards the green. "How is this, my son? Mucius has been fierce, they tell me. Tell me how he hurt you, my child."

The boy was silent for awhile. A fine-featured, good-natured looking boy he was, though at the present moment a cloud of ill-humour darkened his brow.

"What had you done, Giuseppe? You know that Mucius loves you better than all his brothers. You must have offended him, I fear."

"Really, madame," interposed the father, "you will excuse me for suggesting that this is scarcely the tone in which to speak of a furious, ill-tempered——"

"Carlo, my beloved!" replied the mother, putting her beautiful hand upon her husband's mouth. "You know how dear they all are to me. I shall scold poor Sævola if he is to blame: but let us hear."

"Mamma," said the boy, "I knew not that I was trespassing, when to-day at matin-chime, I passed in the outer field that leads from this to the abbot's farm; but Mucius, when I stepped over a little ditch—which, indeed, I scarcely saw in the ground—called me several disagreeable names—in French, too—and threw stones at me for trenching on his glacié. One struck me just above the ear, and he told me to hang out a flag. I luckily had a white handkerchief about my neck; but before I could unwind it, a storm of stones came pouring on my body, and a big one hit me on the right cheek. You see how large the lumps are still."

"But you shouldn't have gone near his glacié."

"Really, madame," again interposed the father, "you will forgive me for saying, that whatever Mucius Sævola—I hate the affected name—may do, you instantly take his part. I am——"

"O my father!" cried Giuseppe, alarmed at the anger shown by the gentleman; "think not of it on my account. My brother must have his way. I dare say I was to blame, but now I am quite recovered. Ho! Paolina dearest! Come, let us do the Sybil and the Priest. The moon is delightful now."

Paolina took the position of the inspired pythoness with lips apart, and eyes upraised, and robe trimmed loosely upon her leg; while Giuseppe, bent on one knee, seemed to listen for the first words of the oracle in wondering expectation.

The other children applauded, and led the performers in triumph to receive the parents' approbation.

"But you have said nothing, my beautiful prophetess," said the admiring mother. "Feel you no inspiration settling on your heart and opening bright views of the future?"

"Speak, Paoletta of my soul!" exclaimed Giuseppe, again putting himself in a posture of expectation. "Speak! We listen for your accents as the oracles of fate."

Some strange fancy took possession of the girl. Her dark olive complexion glowed with some irrepressible thought; her eyes—the most beautiful eyes in the world—for a moment swam in tears.

"Yes, mother, most loved, most precious! how often have I felt in reality the impulse of the divine afflatus! Phœbus Apollo!" she cried, placing herself as before, and waiting, "rapt, inspired," to hear the whisperings of the god, "fill your votary with truthful words—paint to her eyes the scenes of coming years. Ha! he comes! he comes! I feel his breath upon my cheek!—his lips are opening! Hark!"

"Really madame, you will forgive me for suggesting," interposed the father, trying in vain to conceal his gratification at the beauty and elegance of his child, "for reminding you that these theatrical displays are of evil tendency. I shouldn't be surprised to see our Paolinetta figurante at an opera."

"At an opera, father mine?" exclaimed the indignant pythoness; "the priestesses of Delphi never dance!"

"You are too harsh, my Carlo," said the mother. "Let them have their play. How magnificently she stands! What an air!—what a shape!"

"Priestess of the coming time!" said Giuseppe, still kneeling, and speaking in a low, solemn voice, "permit a worshipper of the god you serve to ask you a question about himself."

"Ask!" said Paolina, in a raised tone, and gazed upward.

"Shall I all my life live in this dark spot, and rise, as the highest point of my career, to be a learned gentleman at the bar?"

The young people all gathered round with smiling faces—which, however, they managed to reduce to the solemnity necessary for so great an occasion, when the beautiful sybil began:

"You will plead, brother mine, but in the courts of kings. You will defend the cause of a nation. You will denounce the tyranny of your master—of your benefactor. A whole

people will bless you for your efforts in their cause, and you shall be crowned——" Here she paused for want of a word.

"With a fool's cap," suggested the father, "and Paolina shall find you the bells. Cease, my foolish children!"

"Nay, Carlo, let them go on," said the mother. "He shall be crowned, you say, dread priestess?"

"I have said."

"Well," said Giuseppe, rising, "it is something to have one's fortune told, when it ends in a royal diadem. 'Tis better than a lawyer's hood."

"Don't let Mucius Scævola hear your majesty's rejoicing," said the father. "He is not much addicted to crowned heads. I wonder, by the bye, what detains the Roman regicide all this time."

"He went out with his uncle the abbé for a day on the water," replied the lady.

"They will soon be back, for I hear the church clock strike ten."

"And me, sister pythoness!" cried the youngest of the group—a little boy with a great family likeness to his elder brother, but rather spoilt and selfish. While he spoke his mouth was filled with a morsel of ham and bread, which he had surreptitiously seized from the plate upon the table in the arbour.

"What naughty little applicant is this?" inquired the priestess. "No answer can be given to greedy little pilferers. Away!"

But the boy swallowed the stolen mouthful at the risk of strangulation, and insisted.

"Tell me what I am to be; you have told Giuseppe."

"You are a greedy worshipper, and can get but a poor response. But let this be a comfort to you. You shall reign over a region of hams; so your rank will be as high as Giuseppe's."

"And a better kingdom a great deal," said the gratified little potentate, rising and clapping his hands. "Giuseppe is only to be a pleader, and be crowned, papa says, with a paper crown; but I am to be a real monarch of hams, and won't I eat the delicious food all day!"

"And I, my sister?" cried another fair and graceful girl, kneeling like the rest.

"O! you are so fond of shows and dances and macaroni, my best Lina, and are so idle and so gay, you will be queen of the lazaroni."

"Forgive me, dearest spouse," said the gentleman once more, "for observing that the perpetual hankering after great dignities will be very injurious to their future repose. How will they contentedly accommodate themselves to their rank in life—barristers, physicians, soldiers, and wives of simple landowners or members of our municipality, if their heads are filled with visions of kingdoms and queenships, even if their subjects are only hams and macaroni?"

"It will not injure them at all, my dearest. Pray let them proceed. And yourself, sweet pythoness," continued the mother—"does Apollo lift up the veil that covers your own achievement?"

"Ha! what is't that I see? A palace in Rome!—statues—columns—altars—pictures! Artists in the antechambers—sculptors in the studio! The very fate I dream of—the voice of the eternal city in my ears—the mirror of the Tiber before my eyes!"

"And your husband?" inquired the father.

"I see him not," continued the priestess, in the full flow of vision. "He must be somewhere, but my heart is so filled with other things there is no room for him—no, not a corner! I see St. Angelo; and the pope is coming forth at the great gate. He pauses when he reaches my palazzo; his attendants stop; his holiness descends from his coach; he mounts the stair; he lifts me from my knee, and says, 'Be blest, my daughter—sister of so many kings, you are also niece of a holy cardinal!'"

A loud laugh interrupted the further revelation, and the pythoness dropped her petticoats to their full extent, and changed in a moment her voice and attitude.

"So that's the fate reserved for me?" exclaimed the abbé, who had entered unperceived by the garden steps, accompanied by Mucius Scævola, who, however, stayed in the background and gazed into the sky, as if he were studying the moon. "And truly, Paulina the gipsy, it is a fortune greatly to be desired. Red stockings and high-heeled shoes are a very becoming wear when a man happens to have a handsome foot and a well-formed leg."

"But where have you been all day?" inquired the lady. "We have expected you here some hours ago."

"O! sister of the dark eyes, gracious and kind!" answered the priest, "we have had an adventure. Come hither, majestic Scævola, the enemy of kings, and tell your respected ancestress what mighty deeds you have accomplished. Listen, children all, for Æneas is about to enchant the ears of the maternal Dido, and we must all keep silence—*concitare omnes*."

Mucius Scævola advanced to the front of the arbour. A young man of finely proportioned figure; a face of correct and classical outline, with a mouth of almost feminine softness; a roundness of chin which might have been envied by Hebe, and eyes so dark, so deep, so noble in their expression, that they would have been fitting instruments to threaten and command in the countenance of Jove himself. He was dressed in a green velvet jacket with wide sleeves, slashed and filled in with pink satin; wide trowsers of a light colour extended only down to an inch or two below the knee, and ended in a profusion of red ribbons,

which fluttered half-way to the ankle. His stockings were spangled with silver, and his shoes had silver buckles.

"Your native dress," said his mother, in a tone of joy, when she saw him. "Ah! how it gladdens my heart that you have not altogether deserted the costume of your youth!"

Before the young man had time to reply, the priest broke forth:

"Tis by a special miracle the youth has any apparel at all. Some person unknown to us must have prayed to the Virgin, and she must have made Giacinto the tailor forget to send home Giuseppe's new suit; for on landing on the quay, wet and torn——"

"How's that?" exclaimed the mother. "Were you wrecked in that little skiff, and dashed upon the rocks? O! tell me."

"Forgive me, dearest, for remarking," said the more apathetic father, "that you only hinder the reverend brother from continuing his narrative. It is very good of the Virgin to think of Giuseppe's clothes; but the tailor is an unpunctual knave."

"We were sailing, most excellent relatives, a good way from the land, when we encountered a goodly ship which was proceeding on the voyage from our capital to the coast of France. There was music on board as we came near, and dancing upon the deck. As there was no wind, or very little, we stayed a long time by the vessel's side; and at last some of the party invited us to ascend and join in their enjoyment. We were on the point of doing so, when a nurse, of a very dark complexion—almost a black—strangely dressed, and looking directly under the influence of the devil, held up a child in her arms, and leaned over the bulwarks to see how we achieved our ascent. But, at the moment of our touching the rope, a shriek from the demoniacal nursemaid—probably a Protestant from the wilds of Africa—attracted our attention. The ship had made a small lurch under a momentary puff of wind, and the baby had fallen into the sea. We heard it splash in the water and utter a faint scream. But the crew, far from jumping to the rescue, kept calling over the side, 'Beware, beware! the shark is coming!' Mucius Scævola saw a lady, tall and beautiful—the exact likeness of our Madonna of Griets at the Augustin church—wringing her hands, and crying, 'My child, my child!—will nobody save my child?' and in an instant paddled our boat towards the scene of danger. We saw by a little ripple on the water a few yards off that the voracious monster was on its way to the same destination; and which should get first to the infant was now the question. The fish was more rapid—our boat was still ten feet from the struggling child; the shark's jaws we

perceived were open; and in another moment all would have been over, but Mucius——”

“Blessings on him!” exclaimed the mother.

——“Sprang forward from the prow, clutched the prize in his hand, ordered me with the greatest coolness to keep beating the water all round him with the oar; he slapped the surface at the same time with his disengaged hand, and slowly—still eyeing the animal, which watched, but did not dare to touch him while in motion—he got to the side of the skiff. Then, raising his voice, he ordered the sailors to fire upon the enemy—not to mind hitting him, for the child by this time was safe under the gunwale; and the water was soon scattered into twenty little jets by the bullets that were aimed at the monster. A rope was thrown over; Mucius climbed up the ship’s side, and we soon got the baby lifted up also, for I held it in my arms while the latter part of the struggle was going on. And now the threatener of Porsenna must tell the rest of the story himself, for the supper looks delightful.—Halloa! that greedy little Geronimo has abstracted all the ham!”

“I knew if there was a noble thing to be done in the world,” said Giuseppe, embracing the hero of the adventure, “my brother was the man to do it.”

The sisters all kissed him in turn.

His brother also folded him in his arms.

“And no kiss for me, my son?” said the mother, her eyes filled with tears of pride.

“When they are all gone,” said Mucius, “I have to tell you more.” He looked as if he wished the party to disperse, and they rapidly withdrew.

He threw himself on his knees before his mother, and placed his arms round her waist.

“Mother of my soul,” he said, looking up in her face, “it is all true what my uncle the abbé has related, but he did not tell you—he could not tell you, what happened when I got upon the deck. There lay on one of the sofas a lady with the rescued infant on her breast. She is so beautiful, so tender, so noble, my sweet mother!—her voice reminded me of yours. She thanked me with such eyes! I know not if she gave utterance to her gratitude in words; but she asked me who I was, that she might pray for me at morn and evening prayer. I told her all—I told her of you; and said if she would condescend to land, though only for an hour, that you would rejoice to see her. But she was on the way to France. She is a Frenchwoman, mother, though she comes from some island far away in the great ocean;

but she says she will never forget me, and I—O! friend, dearer than all friends—I shall never forget her—no, never, never more!”

“How old is she, my son?”

“The beautiful have no years. I know not. In ancient times altars would have been raised to her as Venus the pure and holy. In our days I must only look upon her as my protectress. I will pray to no created being but to her.”

“Sister,” at this moment cried out the abbé, “are you coming home?” He put his head through an orifice in the hedge that divided them from the high-road. “We’re waiting for you under the lime.”

“And more, dear mother: she gave me a memorial. She took from her neck a locket. She says it contains the hair of herself and her two children. Look how beautiful it is.”

It was a small gold locket, surrounded with pearls, and containing a heart, in hair of various colour.

“Forgive me for remarking,” said the father, looking over the low space between the dromedary’s humps, “that the clock of St. James——”

“The King of Westphalia, region of hams, is crying for more pork!” exclaimed the reverend uncle. “Quiet, Geronimo, you little beast!”

“Can you read the names upon the back?” continued Mucius. “The moon is for a moment obscured.”

The mother tried to decipher the inscription on the locket.

“The Queen of Naples, realm of macaroni,” again ejaculated the priest, “is afraid of catching cold. Bid them be quick, Paulina——”

“I see—I see the words. They are only christian names. There are no surnames,” said the mother.

“The Roman princess is gone on before,” once more intoned the abbé. “Go, Jerome, son of perdition! run after Paulina.”

“The names,” said the mother, “are Josephine, Eugene, Hortense.”

“Forgive me for remarking,” said the father, making his appearance over the tail of the peacock—“forgive me, Madame Buonaparte, if I press you to make haste.”

“Come then, my Napoleon,” said the mother, “give me your arm. We shall hear more of Josephine ere long. Meanwhile to our house in Ajaccio.”

“On the word of a priest,” cried the abbé, out of all patience, “I can assure you, Sister Letitia, that his Eminence Cardinal Fesch is absolutely starving. Come on, or I shall perish of hunger on the road.”

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RAILWAY DREAMING.

WHEN was I last in France all the winter, deducting the many hours I passed upon the wet and windy way between France and England? In what autumn and spring was it that those Champs Elysées trees were yellow and scant of leaf when I first looked at them out of my balcony, and were a bright and tender green when I last looked at them on a beautiful May morning?

I can't make out. I am never sure of time or place upon a Railroad. I can't read, I can't think, I can't sleep—I can only dream. Rattling along in this railway carriage in a state of luxurious confusion, I take it for granted I am coming from somewhere, and going somewhere else. I seek to know no more. Why things come into my head and fly out again, whence they come and why they come, where they go and why they go, I am incapable of considering. It may be the guard's business, or the railway company's; I only know it is not mine. I know nothing about myself—for anything I know, I may be coming from the Moon.

If I am coming from the Moon, what an extraordinary people the Mooninians must be for sitting down in the open air! I have seen them wipe the hoar-frost off the seats in the public ways, on the faintest appearance of a gleam of sun, and sit down to enjoy themselves. I have seen them, two minutes after it has left off raining for the first time in eight-and-forty hours, take chairs in the midst of the mud and water, and begin to chat. I have seen them by the roadside, easily reclining on iron couches, when their beards have been all but blown off their chins by the east wind. I have seen them, with no protection from the black drizzle and dirt but a saturated canvas blind overhead, and a handful of sand under foot, smoke and drink new beer, whole evenings. And the Mooninian babies. Heavens, what a surprising race are the Mooninian babies! Seventy-one of these innocents have I counted, with their nurses and chairs, spending the day outside the Café de la Lune, in weather that would have satisfied Herod. Thirty-nine have I beheld in that locality at once, with these eyes, partaking of their natural refreshment under umbrellas. Twenty-three have I seen

engaged with skipping-ropes, in mire three inches thick. At three years old the Mooninian babies grow up. They are by that time familiar with coffee-houses, and used up as to truffles. They dine at six. Soup, fish, two entrées, a vegetable, a cold dish, or paté-de-foie-gras, a roast, a salad, a sweet, and a preserved peach or so, form (with occasional whets of sardines, radishes, and Lyons sausage) their frugal repast. They breakfast at eleven, on a light beefsteak with Madeira sauce, a kidney steeped in champagne, a trifle of sweetbread, a plate of fried potatoes, and a glass or two of wholesome Bordeaux wine. I have seen a marriageable young female aged five, in a mature bonnet and crinoline, finish off at a public establishment with her amiable parents, on coffee that would consign a child of any other nation to the family undertaker in one experiment. I have dined at a friendly party, sitting next to a Mooninian baby, who ate of nine dishes besides ice and fruit, and, wildly stimulated by sauces, in all leisure moments flourished its spoon about its head in the manner of a pictorial glory.

The Mooninian Exchange was a strange sight in my time. The Mooninians of all ranks and classes were gambling at that period (whenever it was), in the wildest manner—in a manner, which, in its extension to all possible subjects of gambling, and in the prevalence of the frenzy among all grades, has few parallels that I can recall. The steps of the Mooninian Bourse were thronged every day with a vast, hot, mad crowd, so expressive of the desperate game in which the whole City were players, that one stood aghast. In the Mooninian Journals I read, any day, without surprise, how such a Porter had rushed out of such a house and flung himself into the river, "because of losses on the Bourse;" or how such a man had robbed such another, with the intent of acquiring funds for speculation on the Bourse. In the great Mooninian Public Drive, every day, there were crowds of riders on blood-horses, and crowds of riders in dainty carriages red-velvet lined and white-leather harnessed, all of whom had the cards and counters in their pockets; who were all feeding the blood-horses on paper and stabling them on the board; who were leading a grand life at a great rate and with a mighty

show ; who were all profuse and prosperous while the cards could continue to be shuffled and the deals to go round.

In the same place, I saw, nearly every day, a curious spectacle. One pretty little child at a window, always waving his hand at, and cheering, an array of open carriages escorted by out-riders in green and gold ; and no one echoing the child's acclamation. Occasional deference in carriages, occasional curiosity on foot, occasional adulation from foreigners, I noticed in that connection, in that place ; but, four great streams of determined indifference I always saw flowing up and down ; and I never, in six months, knew a hand or heard a voice to come in real aid of the child.

I am not a lonely man, though I was once a lonely boy ; but that was long ago. The Mooninian capital, however, is the place for lonely men to dwell in. I have tried it, and have condemned myself to solitary freedom expressly for the purpose. I sometimes like to pretend to be childless and companionless, and to wonder whether, if I were really so, I should be glad to find somebody to ask me out to dinner, instead of living under a constant terror of weakly making engagements that I don't want to make. Hence, I have been into many Mooninian restaurants as a lonely man. The company have regarded me as an unfortunate person of that description. The paternal character, occupying the next table with two little boys whose legs were difficult of administration in a narrow space, as never being the right legs in the right places, has regarded me, at first, with looks of envy. When the little boys have indecorously inflated themselves out of the seltzer-water bottle, I have seen discomfiture and social shame on that Mooninian's brow. Meanwhile I have sat majestically using my tooth-pick, in silent assertion of my counterfeit superiority. And yet it has been good to see how that family Mooninian has vanquished me in the long-run. I have never got so red in the face over my meat and wine, as he. I have never warmed up into such enjoyment of my meal as he has of his. I have never forgotten the legs of the little boys, whereas from that Mooninian's soul they have quickly walked into oblivion. And when, at last, under the ripening influence of dinner, those boys have both together pulled at that Mooninian's waistcoat (imploping him, as I conceived, to take them to the play-house, next door but one), I have shrunk under the glance he has given me ; so emphatically has it said, with the virtuous farmer in the English domestic comedy, "Dang it, Squire, can'tee doa thic !" (I may explain in a parenthesis that "thic," which the virtuous farmer can do and the squire can't, is to lay his hand upon his heart—a result opposed to my experience in actual life, where the humbugs are always able to lay their hands upon their hearts, and do it far oftener and much better than the virtuous men.)

In my solitary character I have walked forth after eating my dinner and paying my bill—in the Mooninian capital we used to call the bill "the addition"—to take my coffee and cigar at some separate establishment devoted to such enjoyments. And in the customs belonging to these, as in many other easy and gracious customs, the Mooninians are highly deserving of imitation among ourselves. I have never had far to go, unless I have been particularly hard to please ; a dozen houses at the utmost. A spring evening is in my mind when I sauntered from my dinner into one of these resorts, hap-hazard. The thoroughfare in which it stood, was not as wide as the Strand in London, by Somerset House ; the houses were no larger and no better than are to be found in that place ; the climate (we find ours a convenient scape-goat) had been, for months, quite as cold and wet, and very very often almost as dark, as the climate in the Strand. The place into which I turned, had been there all the winter just as it was then. It was like a Strand-shop, with the front altogether taken away. Within, it was sanded, prettily painted and papered, decorated with mirrors and glass chandeliers for gas ; furnished with little round stone tables, crimson stools, and crimson benches. It was made much more tasteful (at the cost of three and fourpence a-week) by two elegant baskets of flowers on pedestals. An inner raised-floor, answering to the back shop in the Strand, was partitioned off with glass, for those who might prefer to read the papers and play at dominoes, in an atmosphere free from tobacco-smoke. There, in her neat little tribune, sits the Lady of the Counter, surrounded at her needlework by lump-sugar and little punch-bowls. To whom I touch my hat ; she graciously acknowledging the salute. Forth from her side comes a pleasant waiter, scrupulously clean, brisk, attentive, honest : a man to be very obliging to me, but expecting me to be obliging in return, and whom I cannot bully—which is no deprivation to me, as I don't at all want to do it. He brings me, at my request, my cup of coffee and cigar, and, of his own motion, a small decanter of brandy and a liqueur-glass. He gives me a light, and leaves me to my enjoyment. The place from which the shop-front has been taken makes a gay proscenium ; as I sit and smoke, the street becomes a stage, with an endless procession of lively actors crossing and re-crossing. Women with children, carts and coaches, men on horseback, soldiers, water-carriers with their pails, family groups, more soldiers, lounging exquisites, more family groups (coming past, flushed, a little too late for the play), stone-masons leaving work on the new buildings and playing tricks with one another as they go along, two lovers, more soldiers, wonderfully neat young women from shops, carrying flat boxes to customers ; a seller of cool drink, with the

drink in a crimson velvet temple at his back, and a waistcoat of tumblers on; boys, dogs, more soldiers, horse-riders strolling to the Circus in amazing shirts of private life, and yellow kid gloves; family groups; pickers-up of refuse, with baskets at their backs and hooked rods in their hands to fill them with; more neat young women, more soldiers. The gas begins to spring up in the street; and my brisk waiter lighting our gas, enshrines me, like an idol, in a sparkling temple. A family group come in: father and mother and little child. Two short-throated old ladies come in, who will pocket their spare sugar, and out of whom I foresee that the establishment will get as little profit as possible. Workman in his common frock comes in; orders his small bottle of beer, and lights his pipe. We are all amused, sitting seeing the traffic in the street, and the traffic in the street is in its turn amused by seeing us. It is surely better for me, and for the family group, and for the two old ladies, and for the workman, to have thus much of community with the city life of all degrees, than to be getting bilious in hideous black-holes, and turning cross and suspicious in solitary places! I may never say a word to any of these people in my life, nor they to me; but, we are all interchanging enjoyment frankly and openly—not fencing ourselves off and boxing ourselves up. We are forming a habit of mutual consideration and allowance; and this institution of the café (for all my entertainment and pleasure in which, I pay tenpence), is a part of the civilised system that requires the giant to fall into his own place in a crowd, and will not allow him to take the dwarf's; and which renders the commonest person as certain of retaining his or her commonest seat in any public assembly, as the marquis is of holding his stall at the Opera through the evening.

There were many things among the Mooninians that might be changed for the better, and there were many things that they might learn from us. They could teach us, for all that, how to make and keep a Park—which we have been accustomed to think ourselves rather learned in—and how to trim up our ornamental streets, a dozen times a-day, with scrubbing-brushes, and sponges, and soap, and chloride of lime. As to the question of sweetness within doors, I would rather not have put my own residence, even under the perpetual influence of peat charcoal, in competition with the cheapest model lodging-house in England. And one strange sight, which I have contemplated many a time during the last dozen years, I think is not so well arranged in the Mooninian capital as in London, even though our coroners hold their dread courts at the little public-houses—a custom which I am of course prepared to hear is, and which I know beforehand must be, one of the Bulwarks of the British Constitution.

I am thinking of the Mooninian Morgue

where the bodies of all persons discovered dead, with no clue to their identity upon them, are placed, to be seen by all who chose to go and look at them. All the world knows this custom, and perhaps all the world knows that the bodies lie on inclined planes within a great glass window, as though Holbein should represent Death, in his grim Dance, keeping a shop, and displaying his goods like a Regent Street or Boulevard linen-draper. But, all the world may not have had the means of remarking perhaps, as I by chance have had from time to time, some of the accidental peculiarities of the place. The keeper seems to be fond of birds. In fair weather, there is always a cage outside his little window, and a something singing within it as such a something sang, thousands of ages ago, before ever a man died on this earth. The spot is sunny in the forenoon, and, there being a little open space there, and a market for fruit and vegetables close at hand, and a way to the Great Cathedral past the door, is a reasonably good spot for mountebanks. Accordingly, I have often found Paillassé there, balancing a knife or a straw upon his nose, with such intention that he has almost backed himself in at the doorway. The learned owls have elicited great mirth there, within my hearing, and once the performing dog who had a wait in his part, came and peeped in, with a red jacket on, while I was alone in the contemplation of five bodies, one with a bullet through the temple. It happened, on another occasion, that a handsome youth lay in front in the centre of the window, and that a press of people behind me rendered it a difficult and slow process to get out. As I gave place to the man at my right shoulder, he slipped into the position I had occupied, with his attention so concentrated on the dead figure that he seemed unaware of the change of place. I never saw a plainer expression than that upon his features, or one that struck more enduringly into my remembrance. He was an evil-looking fellow of two or three and twenty, and had his left hand at the dragged ends of his cravat, which he had put to his mouth, and his right hand feeling in his breast. His head was a little on one side; his eyes were intently fixed upon the figure. "Now, if I were to give that pretty young fellow, my rival, a stroke with a hatchet on the back of the head, or were to tumble him over into the river by night, he would look pretty much like that, I am thinking!" He could not have said it more plainly;—I have always an idea that he went away and did it.

It is wonderful to see the people at this place. Cheery married women, basket in hand, strolling in, on their way to or from the buying of the day's dinner; children in arms with little pointing fingers; young girls; prowling boys; comrades in working, soldiering, or what not. Ninety-nine times in a

hundred, nobody about to cross the threshold, looking in the faces coming out, could form the least idea, from anything in their expression, of the nature of the sight. I have studied them attentively, and have reason for saying so.

But, I never derived so strange a sensation from this dismal establishment as on going in there once, and finding the keeper moving about among the bodies. I never saw any living creature in among them, before or since, and the wonder was that he looked so much more ghastly and intolerable than the dead, stark people. There is a strong light from above, and a general cold, clammy aspect; and I think that with the first start of seeing him must have come the impression that the bodies were all getting up! It was instantaneous; but he looked horribly incongruous there, even after it had departed. All about him was a library of mysterious books that I have often had my eyes on. From pegs and hooks and rods, hang, for a certain time, the clothes of the dead who have been buried without recognition. They mostly have been taken off people who were found in the water, and are swollen (as the people often are) out of shape and likeness. Such awful boots, with turned-up toes, and sand and gravel clinging to them, shall be seen in no other collection of dress; nor, such neck-cloths, long and lank, still retaining the form of having been wrung out; nor, such slimy garments with puffed legs and arms; nor, such hats and caps that have been battered against pile and bridge; nor, such dreadful rags. Whose work ornaments that decent blouse; who sewed that shirt? And the man who wore it. Did he ever stand at this window wondering, as I do, what sleepers shall be brought to these beds, and whether wonderers as to who should occupy them, have come to be laid down here themselves?

London! Please to get your tickets ready, gentlemen! I must have a coach. And that reminds me, how much better they manage coaches for the public in the capital of the Mooninians! But, it is done by Centralisation! somebody shrieks to me from some vestry's topmost height. Then, my good sir, let us have Centralisation. It is a long word, but I am not at all afraid of long words when they represent efficient things. Circumlocution is a long word, but it represents inefficiency; inefficiency in everything; inefficiency from the state coach to my hackney cab.

BLACK THURSDAY.

As the voyager approaches the shores of Victoria, the first welcome land which greets him is the bold promontory of Cape Otway. If it be at night, the blaze from the light-house on its southern point sends him its cheering welcome for many a league across the ocean which he has so long traversed

in expectation, and calls forth rapturous hurrahs from the throng of passengers who crowd to the fore-castle. If it be day, the eye rests on its lofty forest hills with a quiet and singular delight. These heights fully respond to the ideal of a new land only recently peopled. Clothed with forests from the margin of the sea to their very summits, they realise vividly the approach to a vast region of primeval nature. The tall white stems of the gum-trees stand thickly side by side like so many hoary columns; and, here and there amongst them descend dark ravines; while piles of rocks on the heights, alternating with jagged chimes and projecting spurs of the mountains, present their solitary masses to the breeze of ocean.

Amongst the rocks of this wild shore there are sea-caves of vast extent and solemn aspect, which have never yet been thoroughly explored. The forest extending fifty miles or more, in all directions, is one of the most dense and savage in the whole colony. Until lately it was almost impassable from the density of the scrub, and from the thick masses of vines (that is lianas, or creeping cord-like plants, chiefly parasitical), which, as in the forests of South America, climb from tree to tree, knitting the woods into an obscure and impenetrable shade. Excepting along the track from Mr. Roadknight's station, near the sources of the Barwar, through the heart of the forest to Apollo Bay, a distance of forty miles, you might cut your way with an axe; but would find it difficult to make progress otherwise. The greater part of the promontory—consisting of steep hills covered with gigantic trees intersected by shelving valleys, and dark with congregated fern-trees, beetling precipices, and stony declivities—affords no food for cattle. In one day, however, known to the colonists as Black Thursday, a hurricane of flame opened its rude and impracticable wildernesses to the foot of man: but presented him, at the same time, with a black and blasted chaos of charred trees, and gigantic fallen trunks and branches.

It was in this forest, in the early morning of this memorable day, the sixth of February, eighteen hundred and fifty-one, that a young man opened his eyes and sat up to look about him. He had, the day before, driven a herd of fifty bullocks from the station of Mr. Roadknight thus far on his way towards his own residence in the country, between Lake Corangamite and Mount Gellibrand. He had reached at evening a small grassy valley in the outskirts of the forest watered by a creek falling into the western Barwar; and had there paused for the night. His mob of cattle, tired and hungry, were not inclined to stray from the rich pasturage before them; and, hobbling out his splendid black horse Sorcerer, he prepared to pass the night in the simple fashion of the settler on such journeys. A fallen log supplied him with a convenient

seat, a fire was quickly lit from the dead boughs which lay plentifully around, and his quart-pot, replenished at the creek, was soon hissing and bubbling with its side thrust into the glowing fire. He had a good store of kangaroo-sandwiches, and there he sat with his cup of strong bush-tea; looking alternately at the grazing cattle, and into the solemn, gloomy, and soundless woods, in which even the laughing jackass failed to shout his clamorous adieu to the falling day. Only the distant monotone of the morepork—the nocturnal cuckoo of the Australian wilds—reached his ear; making the profound solitude still more solitary. He very soon rolled himself in his travelling-rug, and flung himself down before the fire—having previously piled a fresh supply of timber upon it—near where his trusty dogs lay, and where Sorcerer, in the favourite fashion of the bush-horse, slept as he stood.

The morning was hushed and breathless. Instead of that bracing chill, with which the Australian lodger out of doors generally wakes up, Robert Patterson found the perspiration standing thick on his face, and he felt a strange longing for a deep breath of fresh air. But motion there was none, except in the little creek which trickled with a fresh and inviting aspect at a few yards from him. He arose, and stripping, plunged into the deepest spot of it that he could find; and thus refreshed, rekindled his fire, and made his solitary breakfast. But all around him hung, as it were, a leaden and death-like heaviness. Not a bough nor a blade of grass was moved by the air. The trees stood inanimately moody and sullen. He cast his eyes through the gloomy shadow beneath them, and a sultry, suffocating density seemed to charge the atmosphere. The sky above him was dimmed by a grey haze.

"There is something in the wind to-day, old fellow," he said, addressing his horse in his usual way; for he had long looked on him as a companion, and firmly believed that he understood all that he said to him. "There is something in the wind: yet, where is the wind?"

The perspiration streamed from him with the mere exertion of saddling his horse, and, as he mounted him to rouse up his cattle, Horse, dogs, and cattle, manifested a listlessness that only an extraordinary condition of the atmosphere could produce. If you had seen the tall, handsome young man seated on his tall and noble horse, you would have felt that they were together formed for any exploit of strength and speed. But the whole troop—cattle, man, and horse—went slowly and soberly along, as if they were oppressed by a great fatigue or the extreme exhaustion of famine.

The forest closed in upon them again, and they proceeded along a narrow track, flanked on each side by tall and densely-growing trees; the creeping vines making of the whole

forest one intricate, impenetrable scene. All was hushed as at midnight. No bird enlivened the solitude by its cries, and they had left the little stream. Suddenly there came a puff of air; but it was like the air from the jaws of a furnace, hot, dry, withering in its very touch. The young settler looked quickly in the direction from which it came, and instantly shouted to the cattle before him, in a wild, abrupt, startling shout, swung aloft the stock-whip which he held in his hand, and brought it down with the report of a pistol, and the sharp cut as with a knife, on the ear of the huge bullock just before him. The stock-whip, with a handle about a half a yard long and a thong of three yards long, of plaited bullock-hide, is a terrible instrument in the hands of a practised stockman. Its sound is the note of terror to the cattle, it is like the report of a blunderbuss, and the stockman at full gallop will hit any given spot on the beast that he is within reach of, and cut the piece clean away through the thickest hide that bull or bison ever wore. He will strike a fly on a spot of mud at full speed, and take away the skin with him, making the rosy blood spring into the wind, and the astonished animal dart forward as if mad.

Loud and louder, wilder and more fiercely shouted the squatter, and dashed his horse forward over fallen trees; through crashing thickets, first on one side of the road, and then on the other. Crack, crack, went the stinging, slashing whip; loud was the bark of dogs; and the mob of cattle rushed forwards at headlong speed. The young man gazed upward; and, through the only narrow opening of the forest saw strange volumes of smoke rolling southward. Hotter, hotter, stronger and more steadily came the wind. He suddenly checked his horse, and listening, grew pale at the sound which reached him. It was a low deep roar, as of a wind in the tree-tops, or of a heavy water-fall, distant, and smothered in some deep ravine.

"God have mercy!" he exclaimed, "a bush fire! and in this thick forest!" Once more he sprang forward, shouting, thundering with his whip. He and the herd were galloping along the narrow wood track. But, as he had turned westward in the direction of his home, the woods—of which he had before seen the boundary—now closed for some miles upon him; and, as he could not turn right or left for the chaos of vines and scrub that obstructed the forest, the idea of being overtaken there by the bush-fire was horrible. Such an event would be death, and death only.

Therefore, he urged on his flying herd with desperation. Crack upon crack from his long whip, resounded through the hollow wood. The cattle themselves seemed to hear the ominous sound, and sniff the now strongly perceptible smell of burning. The roar of the fire came louder, and ever and anon

seemed to swell and surge as if urged on by a rough rising blast. The heat was fierce and suffocating. The young squatter's clothes clung to him with streaming perspiration. The horse and cattle steamed and smoked with boiling heat. Yet onward, onward they dashed with lolling tongues. Sorcerer, specked with patches of foam on his dark shining body, seemed to grow furiously impatient of the obstruction offered by the bullocks in his path. As his master's whip exploded on their flanks, he laid back his ears; and, with flaming eyeballs and bared teeth, strove to tear them in his rage.

Robert Patterson knew that the extraordinary heat and drought of the summer had scorched up the grass; the very ground; had licked up the water from crab-hole, pool, and many a creek; had withered the herbage into crisp hay, and so withered the foliage, that you might crumble it between your fingers. The country seemed thoroughly prepared for a conflagration, and only required this fiery wind to send a blaze of extermination over the whole land. For weeks, nay months, the shepherds and sawyers had spoken of fires burning in the hills; and, in the fern-tree breaks of this very forest he had been recently told that flames had been observed in various directions burning redly by night.

If the fire had reached him and his herd before they escaped into the open plains, they must be consumed like stubble. The cattle began to show signs of exhaustion, hanging out their parched tongues, and panting heavily; the perspiration on himself and horse was dried up by the awful heat, and the dogs ran silently, or only whining lowly to themselves, as they hunted every hollow on their way for water. Suddenly, they were out in an open plain, yet with the forest on either hand, but at a considerable distance.

What a scene! The woods were flaming and crackling in one illimitable conflagration. The wind, dashing from the north in gusts of inconceivable heat, seemed to sear the very face and shrivel up the lungs. The fire leaped from tree to tree, flashing and roaring along, with the speed and the destructiveness of lightning. The sere foliage seemed to snatch the fire, and to perish in it in a riot of demoniacal revelry. On it flew, fast as the fleetest horse could gallop; and consuming acres of leaves in a moment, still remained to rage and roar amongst the branches and in the hollow stems of ancient trees. The whole wood on the left was an enormous region of intensest flame; and that on the right, sent forth the sounds of the same ravaging fires; but, being to windward, the flames could not be seen for the vast clouds of smoke, mingled with fiery sparks, which were rolled on the air. There was a sound as of thunder, mingled with the crash of falling trees, and the wild cries of legions of birds of all kinds; which

fell scorched and blackened and dead to the ground.

Once out on this open plain, the cattle were speedily lost in the blinding ocean of smoke, and the young settler, obliged to abandon them, made a dash onward for his life. Now the flames came racing along the grass with the speed of the wind, and mowing all smooth as a pavement; now it tore furiously through some near point of the forest, and flung burning ashes and tangles of blazing bark upon the galloping rider. But Sorcerer, with an instinct more infallible than human sagacity, sped on, over thicket, and stone, and fallen tree, snorting in the thick masses of smoke, and stretching forward his gaping jaws as to catch every breath of air to sustain impeded respiration.

When the wind veered, the reek driven backward, revealed a most amazing scene. The blazing skirts of the forests; huge isolated trees, glaring red—standing columns of fire; here a vast troop of wild horses with flying manes and tails, rushing with thundering hoofs over the plain; there herds of cattle running with bloodshot eyes and hanging tongues, they knew not whither, from the fires; troops of kangaroos leaping frantically across the rider's path, their hair singed and giving out strongly the stench of fire; birds of all kinds and colours shrieking piteously as they drove wildly by, and yet saw no spot of safety; thousands of sheep standing huddled in terror on the scorched flats, with singed wool, deserted by their shepherds, who had fled for their lives.

But onward flew the intrepid Sorcerer, onward stretched his rider, thinking lightning-winged thoughts of home, and of his helpless, paralysed mother there.

With a caution inspired by former outbreaks of bush-fires, he had made at some distance round his homestead a bare circle. He had felled the forest trees, leaving only one here and there, at such distances that there was little fear of ignition. As the summer dried the grass, he had set fire to it on days when the wind was gentle enough to leave the flame at command; watching, branch in hand to beat out any blaze that might have travelled into the forest. By this means he had hitherto prevented the fire from reaching his homestead; and he had strongly recommended the same plan to his neighbours, though generally with little effect. Now, the fire was so terrible, and sparks flew so wide on the wind, that he feared they might kindle the grass round his homestead, and that he might find everything and every person there consumed.

But, behold! the gleaming, welcome waters of Lake Colac! Sorcerer rushed headlong towards it; and wading hastily up to his sides in its cooling flood, thrust his head to the eyes into it and drank, as if he could never be satisfied with less than the whole lake. Englishmen, new to the scene,

would have trembled for the horse ; but the bush steed knows best what he needs, eats and drinks as likes him best, and flourishes on it. Smoking hot, the rider lets him drink his fill, and all goes well. The heat produces perspiration, and the evaporation cools and soothes him. Robert Patterson did not lose a moment in following Sorcerer's example. He flung himself headlong from the saddle, dressed as he was, dived, and splashed, and drank exuberantly. He held again and again his smarting face and singed hands in the delicious water ; then threw it over the steed, that now, satiated, stood panting in the flood. He laved and rubbed down the grateful animal with wave after wave, cleaning the dried perspiration from every hair, giving him refreshment at every pore. Then up and away again.

He had not ridden two hundred yards, before he saw, lying on the plain, a horse that had fallen in saddle and bridle, and lay with his legs under him, and head stretched stiffly forward, with glaring eyeballs ; but dead. Near him was a man, alive, but sunk in exhaustion. His eyes turned wildly on the young squatter, and his parched lips moved, but without a sound. Robert Patterson comprehended his need ; and, running to the lake, brought his pannikin full of water, and put it to his mouth. It was the water of life to him. His voice and some degree of strength came quickly back. He had come from the north, and had ridden a race with the fire, till horse and man had dropped here, the horse never to rise again. But Patterson's need was too urgent for delay. He found the man had no lack of provisions ; he carried him in his arms to the margin of the lake, mounted, and rode on.

As he galloped forward, it was still fire—fire everywhere. He felt convinced that the conflagration—fanned by the strong wind, and acting upon fires in a hundred quarters—extended over the whole sun-dried colony.

It was still early noon, when, with straining eyes, and a heart which seemed almost to stand still with a terrible anxiety, he came near his own home. He darted over the brow of a hill—there it lay safe ! The circle within his cleared boundary was untouched by the fire. There were his paddocks, his cattle, his huts, and home. With a lightning thought his thanks flew up to heaven, and he was the next moment at his door, in his house, in his mother's arms.

Robert's anxiety had been great for the safety of his mother, her anxiety was tripled for him. Terror occasioned by a former conflagration had paralysed her lower extremities ; and now, the idea of her only son, her only remaining relative in the colony, being met by this unexampled fire in the dense defiles of the terrible Otway Forest, kept her in a state of the most fearful tension of mind. Mrs. Patterson, though confined to her wheeled chair, was a woman of pre-

eminent energy and ability. Left with her boy a mere infant, she had managed all her affairs with a skill and discretion that had produced great prosperity. Though her heart was kind, her word was law ; and there was no man on her run who dared in the slightest to disobey her ; nor one within the whole country round who did not respect and revere her. She had been a remarkably handsome woman. The whole of the floors of the station being built upon one level, in her wheeled chair she could be at any moment in any part of her house or premises.

The moment the first joy of mother and son was over, what a scene presented itself ! The station was like a fair. From the whole country round people had fled from the fire, and had instinctively fled there. There was a feeling that the Patterson precautions, which they themselves had neglected, were the guarantees of safety. Thither shepherds had driven their flocks, stockmen their herds, and whole families, compelled to fly from their burning houses, had hurried thither with the few effects that they could snatch up, and bear with them. Patterson's paddocks were crowded with horses and cattle ; the bush round his station was literally hidden beneath his own and his neighbour's flocks. Stockmen, shepherds, substantial squatters, now houseless men, were in throngs. Families, with troops of children, had encamped on the open ground near his house, beneath temporary tents of sheets and blankets. His house was crammed with fugitives, and was one scene of crowding, confusion and sorrow. Luckily the Patterson store-room was well stocked with flour, and there could be no want of meat with all those flocks and herds about them. But for the cattle themselves there must soon be a famine ; and the moment that the fire abated, scouts must be sent off in all directions—but especially to the high plains around Lake Corangamite—in search of temporary pasture. Meantime fires were lighted in a dozen places ; and frying-pans and kettles fully employed ; for, spite of flight, and loss, and grief, hunger, as Homer thousands of years ago asserted, is impudent, and will be fed.

The stories that the people had to tell were most melancholy. Houses burnt down, flocks destroyed, children suffocated in the smoke or lost in the rapid flight ; shepherds and bullock-drivers consumed with their cattle. Numbers had fled to creeks and pools, and yet had been severely burnt ; the flames driving over the surface of the water with devouring force. Some had lain in shallow brooks, turning over and over, till finally forced to get up and fly. Still, as the day went on, numbers came pouring in with fresh tales of horror and devastation. The whole country appeared to be the prey of the flames ; and men who were, a few hours before, out of the reach of poverty or calamity, were now homeless paupers.

"The Maxwells, mother," Patterson asked—"is there any news of them?"

"None, my dear Robert, none," replied his mother. "I hope and believe that they are quite safe. They have long ago adopted your own plan of a clearance ring, and I doubt not are just now as much a centre of refuge as we are."

"But I should like to be sure," said Robert, seriously. "I must ride over and see."

"Must you? I think you must not," said Mrs. Patterson. "But if you cannot be satisfied, let some one of the men go; there are plenty at hand, and you are already worn out with fatigue and excitement."

"No, I am quite well and fresh—I had rather go myself," said Robert; "it is not far." And he strode out, his mother saying—"If you find all right, don't come back to-night."

Robert Patterson was soon mounted on a fresh and powerful horse, and cantered off towards Mount Hesse. It was only seven miles off. The hot north wind had ceased to blow; the air was cooler, and the fires in the forest were burning more tamely. Yet he had to ride over a track which showed him the ravages which the flames had made in his pleasant woods. The whole of the grass was annihilated; the dead timber lying on the ground was still burning; and huge hollow trees stood like great chimneys, with flames issuing from their tops as from a furnace, and a red intense fire burning within their trunks below; and from them burning earthy matter came tumbling out smoking and rolling on the ground. He was about crossing a small creek, when he saw an Irishman—a shepherd of the Maxwells—sitting on its banks; his clothes were nearly all consumed from his back, his hat was the merest remaining fragment, scorched and shrivelled. The man was rocking himself to and fro and groaning.

"Fehan!" exclaimed Patterson. "What has happened to you?"

The man turned upon him a visage that startled him with terror. It was, indeed, no longer a human visage; but a scorched and swollen mass of deformity. The beard and hair were burnt away. Eyes were not visible; the whole face being a confused heap of red flesh and hanging blisters. The poor fellow raised a pair of hands that displayed equally the dreadful work of the fire.

The young squatter exclaimed, "How dreadful! Let me help you, Fehan—let me take you home."

The man groaned again; and, opening his distorted mouth with difficulty, and with agony, said:

"I have no home—it is burnt."

"And your family?"

"Dead—all dead!"

"But are you sure—are you quite sure?" said Robert, excitedly.

"I saw one—my eldest boy: he was lying burnt near the house. I lifted him, to carry him away, but he said, 'Lay me down, father,—lay me down; I cannot bear it.' I laid him down, and asked, 'Where are the rest?' 'All fled into the bush,' he said, and then he died. They are all burnt."

Robert Patterson flung the wretched man a linen handkerchief, bidding him dip it in the creek and lay it on his face to keep the air from it, and turned his horse, saying he would look for the family. He soon found the place where the hut had stood. It was burnt to ashes. On the ground, not far from it, lay the body of the dead little boy. Patterson hastened along the track of the old road to the Maxwells' station, tracing it as well as he could in the fire and the fallen flaming branches. He felt sure the flying family would take that way. In a few minutes it brought him again upon the creek by which the poor man sat, but lower down.

There stood a hut in a damp swamp, which had been used years ago for the sheep washing, but had long been deserted. It was surrounded by thick wattles, still burning. The hut was on fire; but its rotten timbers forcing out far more smoke than flame. As he approached, he heard low cries and lamentations. "The family is fled thither," he said to himself, "and are perishing of suffocation." He sprang to the ground, and dashed forward through columns of heavy smoke. It was hopeless to breathe in it, for its pungent and stinging strength seemed to close his lungs, and water rushed from his eyes in torrents.

But pushing in, he seized the first living thing that he laid his hands on, and bore it away. It was a child. Again and again he made the desperate essay, and succeeded in bringing out no less than four children and the mother, who was sunk on the floor as dead, but who soon gave signs of life as she came into the air.

The young man was now in the utmost perplexity with his charge. It was a heart-rending sight. The whole group were more or less burnt; but, as it seemed to him, not so much burnt as to affect their lives. Their station, was three miles distant, and he had no alternative but to leave them here till he rode on and sent a cart for them. With much labour, carrying the children one after another in his arms, he conveyed the woeful group to the father.

As the young man stood bewildered by the cries and lamentations of the family on meeting the father, a horse ridden by a lady approached at a gallop. This apparition contrasted strangely with the lamentable group of sufferers. The young lady was tall and of a most beautiful figure, and was mounted on a fine bay horse. A light skirt, and broad felt hat were all the deviations from her home costume that haste had led her

to assume. Her face, fresh and roseate, full of youth, loveliness, and feeling, was at the same time grave and anxious, as she gazed in speechless wonder on the scene.

"Miss Maxwell!" Patterson exclaimed, "in the name of Heaven, what news? How is all at the Mount? Yet, on this dreadful day what but ill can happen?"

"Nothing is amiss, that I know of," said the young lady, "we are safe at home. The fire has not come near us."

"Thank God!" said Robert. "I was going to your house, when I fell in with this unfortunate family. Will you ride back and send us a cart?"

"But I beg you will come with me, for I, too, was going to you."

"To me!" cried the young man, in the utmost astonishment. "Then all is not right. Is George well?"

"I hope so," replied Miss Maxwell; but the tears started into her eyes at the same moment, and Robert Patterson gave a groan of apprehension.

"I hope so," added the young lady, recovering her self-possession; "but that is the point I want to ascertain. Yesterday, he went with Turcen into the hills to bring in cattle, and this morning the fire surprised them when they had taken two different sweeps along the side of a range. Turcen could not find George again, but made his way home; hoping his master had done the same. George has not yet come, and the fire is raging so fiercely in the hills, that I could think of nothing but coming to you for your advice and assistance."

"Thank you, Ellen!" said Robert with a sad emotion. "I will find him if he be alive." He sprang upon his horse; and, telling the unhappy family that he would send them immediate assistance, both he and Miss Maxwell galloped away.

We will not attempt to divulge their conversation on the way; but will let the reader a little into the mutual relations of these two families and these young people. Miss Ellen Maxwell and her brother George were the sole remaining members of their family. As the nearest neighbours of the Pattersons, they had grown into intimate friends. George and Robert had been play-fellows in Van Diemen's Land; and here, where they had come in their boyhood, they were school-fellows. Since then they had gradually grown, from a similarity of tastes and modes of life, the most intimate friends. It was not likely that Robert Patterson and Ellen Maxwell could avoid liking one another. They possessed everything in mind, person, and estate, which made such an attachment the most natural thing in the world. Ellen was extremely attached to Mrs. Patterson, for whom she had the highest veneration; Ellen had received an excellent education in Edinburgh, whither she had been sent to her friends. In

her nature she was frank, joyous, and affectionate; but not without a keen sense of womanly pride, which gave a certain dignity to her manner, and a reputation for high spirit.

All had gone well between herself and Robert till some six months ago. But, since then, there had sprung up a misunderstanding. Nobody could tell how it had arisen; nobody except Ellen knew; and whatever was the secret cause, she locked it impenetrably within her own bosom. All at once she had assumed a distant and haughty manner towards Robert Patterson. From him she did not conceal that she felt she had cause for dissatisfaction, but she refused to explain. When, confounded at the circumstance, he sought for an explanation, she bade him search his own memory and his heart, and they would instruct him. She insisted that they should cease to regard themselves as affianced, and only consented that nothing as yet should be said on the subject to her brother or Mrs. Patterson, on the ground that it would most painfully afflict them.

Ellen, who used to be continually riding over to see Mrs. Patterson with her brother, now rarely appeared, and proudly declined to give her reasons for the change in her; adding that she must absent herself altogether, if the subject were renewed. To her brother she was equally reserved, and he attributed her conduct to caprice; bidding Robert take no notice of it. Ellen was not without other admirers, but that was nothing new. One young man, who had lately come into the neighbourhood, paid her assiduous attention, and gossip did not fail to attribute the cause of Robert Patterson's decline of favour to his influence. But Ellen gave no countenance to such a supposition. She was evidently under no desire to pique her old lover by any marked predilection for a new one. Her nature was too noble for the pettiness of coquetry, and any desire to add poignancy to coldness. On the other hand, it was clear to the quietly watchful eye of her brother, that she was herself even more unhappy than Robert. Her eyes often betrayed the effects of secret weeping, and the paleness of her cheek belied the assumed air of cheerfulness that she wore.

Things were in this uncomfortable state at the outbreak of the fire. It was, therefore, a most cheering thought to Patterson that, in her distress, she had flown first, and at once to him. This demonstrated confidence in his friendship. True, on all occasions, she had protested that her sense of his high moral character was not an iota abated; but, in this spontaneous act, Robert's heart persuaded himself that there lay something more.

No sooner did he reach the Mount, than, leaving Ellen to send off assistance to the Fehans, he took Turcen the stockman, and rode into the forest hills. It was soon dark,

and they had to halt; but not far from the spot where Turcen had lost sight of his master. They tethered their horses in a space clear of trees and of fire, and gave them corn that they had brought with them. When the moon rose, they went on to some distance uttering loud coöees to attract the ear of the lost man; but all in vain. The fire had left the ground hot and covered with ashes, and here and there huge trees burning like columns of red-hot iron.

Finding all their efforts for the night fruitless, they flung themselves down beside their horses; and, with the earliest peep of dawn they were up and off higher into the hills. Their way presented at every step the most shocking effects of the fire. Ever and anon they came upon bullocks which had perished in it. Here and there, too, they described the remains of kangaroos, opossums, and hundreds of birds, seared and shrivelled into sable masses of cinder.

They came at length to the spot where Turcen and George Maxwell had parted; and the experienced bushman carefully sought out the tracks of his horses' feet, and followed them. These were either obliterated by the fire, or failed from the rocky hardness of the ground; but, by indefatigable search, they regained them, and were led at length to the edge of a deep and precipitous ravine. In the ravine itself the trees and grass remained unscathed; the torrent of fire had leapt over it, sweeping away, however, every shrub and blade of herb from the heights.

"God defend us!" exclaimed Robert, "the smoke must have blinded him, and concealed this frightful place. Man and horse are doubtless dashed to pieces."

He raised a loud and clear coöee; instantly answered by the wild and clamorous barking of a dog; which, in the next instant, was seen leaping and springing about in the bottom of the dell, as if frantic with delight.

"That is Snirrup!" exclaimed Turcen; and the two men began to descend the steep side of the ravine. Robert Patterson outstripped his older and heavier companion. He seemed to fly down the sheer and craggy descent. Here he seized a bough, there a point of the rock, and, in the next instant, was as rapidly traversing the bottom of the glen. Snirrup the cattle-dog rushed barking and whining upon him, as in a fit of ecstatic madness, and then bounded on before him. Robert followed in breathless anxiety; stopped the next moment by the sight of George Maxwell's horse, lying crushed and dead. Robert cast a rapid glance around, expecting every moment to see his friend stretched equally lifeless. But presently he heard the faint sound of a human voice.

There lay George stretched in the midst of a grassy thicket, with a face expressing agony and exhaustion. Robert seized his offered hand, and George called first for water. His friend started up and ran down

the valley at full speed. He was soon back with a pannikin of water, which the sufferer drank with avidity.

He now learned that, as had been supposed, in the thick smoke, the horse had gone over the precipice, and was killed in an instant. George had escaped, his fall being broken by his steed; and he was flung into the thicket, which again softened the shock of his descent. But he had a broken leg, and was, besides, extremely bruised, and torn. Life, however, was strong within him; and Turcen and Robert lost no time in having a litter of poles bound together with stringy bark made soft with grass and leaves, laid in a sheet of the same bark. They had three miles to bear the shattered patient; to whom every motion produced excruciating agonies. It was not long before they heard people in different parts of the wood loudly coöeing; and their answers soon brought not only a number of men who had been sent out in quest of them, but also Miss Maxwell, herself.

We shall not attempt to describe the sad and yet rejoicing interview of the brother and sister, nor the rapidity with which the different men were sent off upon the horses tied in the hills for the surgeon; who lived two miles off.

In a few days George Maxwell—his leg having been set and his wounds dressed—had become easy enough to relate all that had happened to him; the dreadful night which he had passed in extreme agony in the glen, and the excitement which the loud, ringing coöees of Robert, which had reached him, but to which he was unable to reply, had occasioned both him and the faithful and sympathising dog, who barked vehemently; but, as it proved, in vain.

From the moment of this tragic occurrence Robert Patterson was constantly in attendance at the Mount on his friend. He slept in the same room with him, and attended with Ellen as his nurse in the day-time. From this moment the cloud which so long hung over the spirit of Ellen Maxwell had vanished. She was herself again; always kind and open, yet with a mournful tone in her bearing towards Robert, which surprised and yet pleased him. It looked like regret for past unkindness. As they sate one evening over their tea, while George was in a profound sleep in the next room, Ellen looking with emotion at him, said, in a low, tremulous voice, "Robert, I owe much to you."

"To me?" said Robert, hastily. "Isn't George as much a brother to me as to you?"

"It is not that which I mean," added Ellen, colouring deeply, yet speaking more firmly; "it is that I have done you great wrong. I believed that you had said a most ungenerous thing, and I acted upon my belief with too much pride and resentment. I was told that you had jested at me as the daughter of a convict."

Robert sprang up. "It is false! I never

said it," he exclaimed. "Who could tell you such a malicious falsehood?"

"Calm yourself," added Ellen, taking the young man's hand. "I shall tell you all.

"Hear me patiently; for I must impress first on you the strange likelihood of what was reported to me. You were driven to a stockman's hut, it was said, by a storm—you and a young friend. You were very merry, and this friend congratulated you in a sportive style on having won what he was pleased to call the richest young woman in the colony. And with a merry laugh you were made to add, 'and the daughter of the most illustrious of lags!'"

Robert Patterson, with a calmness of concentrated wrath, asked, in a low measured tone: "Who said that?"

"The woman whom you lately saved with all her family. It was Nelly Fehan."

"Nelly Fehan!" said Robert, in amazement; "what have I ever done to her that deserved such a stab?"

"You threatened to send Fehan to prison for bush-ranging. You reminded him of his former life and unexpired sentence."

"That is true," said Robert, after a pause of astonishment. "And this was the deadly revenge—the serpents! But, O Ellen! why could you not speak? One word, and all would have been explained."

"I could not speak, Robert. Wounded pride silenced me. But I have suffered severely; have been fearfully punished. I can only say—forgive me!"

One long embrace obliterated the past.

The late Mr. Maxwell had been transported for the expression of his liberal political principles in hard and bigoted times. There was not a man in the penal settlement, who did not honour his political integrity and foresight, and who did not reverence his character. But the convicts as a body were proud to claim him as of their own class, though sent thither only for the crime of a Hampden or a Sidney. Whenever reproach was thrown on the convict section of society, the insulted party pointed to the venerable exile, and triumphantly hailed him as their chief. No endeavours, though they were many, and conducted by powerful hands, had ever been able to procure a reversal of his sentence. The injuries of a man of his high talents and noble nature might be comparatively buried at the antipodes; at home they would be a present, a perpetual and a damaging reproach. He had lived and died a banished, but a highly-honoured man. Still, as he rose to a higher estimation and an unusual affluence, there were little minds who delighted occasionally to whisper—"After all, he is but a lag." And it was on this tender point that the minds of his children, whose ears such remarks had reached and wounded, had become morbidly sensitive.

Amid the general calamity, this reconciliation was like a song of thanksgiving in the

generous heart of Robert Patterson, and quickened it to tenfold exertions in alleviating the sufferings of his neighbours. His joy was made boundless and overflowing by a circumstance which appeared to be little short of a miracle. When Robert rode up to his own station, he beheld his mother—not seated in her wheeled chair—but on foot; light, active, and alert, going to and fro amongst the people whose destitution still kept them near his house. The mass of misery that she saw around her and the exertion which it stimulated, burst the paralytic bonds which had enchained her for years. The same cause which had disabled her limbs had restored them.

The conflagration had extended over a space of three hundred miles by a hundred and fifty, and far away beyond the Gouburn, the Broken River, and the Ovens, we have witnessed the remaining traces of its desolation. Over all this space, flocks and herds in thousands had perished. Houses, ricks, fences and bridges had been annihilated. Whole families had been destroyed. Solitary travellers, flying through the boundless woods before the surging flame, had fallen and perished. For weeks and months, till the kindly rains of autumn had renewed the grass, people journeying through the bush, beheld lean and famishing cattle, unable to rise from the ground, and which by faint bellowings seemed to claim the pity and aid of man. Perhaps no such vast devastation ever fell on any nation; and the memory of Black Thursday is an indelible retrospect in Victoria.

A BRITISH INTEREST BETRAYED.

ON behalf of the best interests of the British public, sir, I claim a space in HOUSEHOLD WORDS to represent the injustice done me by her Majesty's Civil Service Commissioners. I do not, sir, address you on a mere personal question; sure I am that the blarsting of my own prospects in life by the ungracious refusal to admit me to an official situation under government would not have been deemed by me sufficient reason for thus introducing upon your personal details, but I feel how well I am able to corroborate the statements of the press that the Civil Service Examinations are repugnant to the habits of this country, that the absurd nonsense of requiring for a meek Clark's situation and celery the attainments of a Nooten or a Porsen, to make the examination an affair for senny-anglers and dubble-firstes, is inherently falacious policy besides being unjust to the middle classes of this country. Sir, I am a rejected man.

In the first place I am set down as if I was one of the eighty-nine candidates named in the Bluebook as having been turned back for ignorance of spellin. That calumny I treat with sheer contempt. I am not ignorant of spellin and I never wars. A few errors in

scholarsip resultin meerly from rappidaty of witing ort not to count agains a man, and tho i sea it said in the report that dictashion was first read over to show the sens of the passage, then dictaited sloly and then we wars allowed time to look over an revis what we had rwritten, this is only a subperfuge of thares. For persons in the abit of corect writing ar not acustomed to revis thare othorrgpy except with a Jonson's Dictionary which—wood you beleive it, sir—was not allowed us!—and this is England! This they call thare oportunity for revisen! After this expoisure, ned i say more?

Furthermore [From this point we have gone through our correspondent's letter with a Johnson.—Ed. H. W.], these unjust commissioners, who declare that of the majority of candidates for situations as scribes and accountants to the nation, little or nothing more is required than an assurance of their ability to write, and spell, and cipher, these unjust commissioners reckon me, I am told, among the thirty-three rejected men who cannot cipher any more than they can spell. Cipher, sir! Was there ever an Englishman who, whether he knew ciphering or not, if put into a place of trust requiring calculations, did not prove himself a man of business? It is repugnant to the habits of this nation to be obliged—or only allowed to oblige itself—to educate itself. Has not parliament declared it? Is not Lord John Russell a despised man for suggesting that we might be a little less ignorant than we are if we did more than we are now doing in the way of education? Sir, I am for the voluntary principle. If I don't voluntarily take to ciphering, why am I to be asked to cipher? Depend upon it, sir, an Englishman's liberty is his birthright. Why am I to be compelled to know this and that? Why am I to submit to an inquisitorial—yes, sir, I say an inquisitorial and intrusive attempt made on the part of a centralised—yes, sir, a centralised—government board or commission to find out whether I *can* keep accounts before I receive public money for the keeping of them? Depend upon it, sir, the common sense of the nation is opposed to anything of the sort. It may be theoretically right to make this sort of inquiry; but we are a practical people, sir, and we act practically; and when we do act practically, it is generally found to answer; whereas, when we act theoretically, we become continental, and adopt a system under which no plain man's habeas corpus can be safe in his own castle. Sir, I consider all these educational tyrannies fit only for a revolutionary period. A certain sort of education being a part of the national character, has been found to agree with it best; and if it doesn't, on the whole, include a certainty in the matter of spelling, a good handwriting, a faculty of doing sums, a positive idea whether Stockholm is in Denmark, Norway, or Sweden, or

whether Alexander the Great did well in allowing Messalina to be killed, and whether Cromwell didn't act too harshly by Jane Shore—I say, sir, that if our education while we are still youths does not enable us to master fully any little difficulties of this sort, the Englishman is happy who is so far ignorant in his young days. The nation would not be so robust as she is, if her sons had not, in a great measure, to pick up what they know by their own manly exertions.

But I deny that I am ignorant of ciphering. I got a prize for it at the Reverend Mr. Flail's school for two half years running, and I send them to you as vouchers,—Little Henry and His Bearer, and Paul and Virginia, with the school-plate and certificate in their fly-leaves. Mr. Flail was a Fellow and Tutor of Porcus College, Oxen. Now, sir, if that is not evidence enough, set me a sum; but what I do ask is, that you show yourself some knowledge of that about which you make inquiry. I copy verbatim, sir, one question put to me, precisely as these precious commissioners have set it down:

"Add together $\frac{1}{2}$, $2\frac{1}{2}$, and $13\frac{3}{4}$; divide by $13\frac{1}{4}$ and subtract the result from $5\frac{3}{4}$."

I was not to do that unless I liked; but I did do it, having first brought it to sense. For did any one ever see such a muddle of big figures and little figures, some of them actually written one on the top of another? I felt it an affront to be examined by such men. However, I put the figures properly into a row, added together 16 217, and 13310; that came, of course, to 1335313; then I divided by 1314, which came to 102975 and a lot more figures; and then—I was to subtract that from 5370! Of course I could only tell the examiners that if they knew how to do that, they were cleverer than myself. Well, sir, I haven't yet done with these clever gentlemen, though I think I may spare your readers any further exposure of their ignorance in the most simple matters of account. There were twenty-eight questions in ciphering, of which we were required only to answer any two. One was to turn a quantity of odd money into farthings,—forty-three pounds and more. What could be more unpractical? Let any plain man walk into whatever house of business you please, and ask to have change given him for forty-three pounds in farthings, where is the business man who will do it, I should wish to know? The only other question that I did was this one:

"If 90s. will pay 5 men for 12 days' work, how much will pay 32 men for 24 days' work?"

My answer, of course, was 2s. 9d. And as we were asked here to "Explain the principle of the rule by which you proceed," I used up all the rest of my time in doing so, after a way simple enough to be comprehensible by men so evidently backward. If, after all, they didn't understand me, who is to blame?

I shall only allude to one thing more. The examiners tried us on grammar, and asked, "What is meant by government in grammar?" "Centralisation," I wrote. And I had them there. "A Downing Street Commission of Examiners." For that they plucked me. It is well for them to say that they examine only in those things which are the school attainments absolutely necessary to ensure a power of doing what has to be done in each department,—sometimes only writing, sometimes more, with an odd language, for the Foreign Office, and a liberty to show any degree of proficiency, but a requirement only of a little of the simplest. So they may say; but I have shown, by my own case, how the truth stands. No wrangler could have answered as I answered, and yet I was plucked out of spite, because I showed, though by one answer only, that I was no base truckler, that I had not the spirit of an underling. They want to find out who is readiest to be a base tool, and that is the whole meaning of this inquisitorial intrusion upon British liberties. Proud am I to say that they did not find subservient material in me. So they rejected me, and in so doing insulted our borough member, who has been promising my father to do something for me during the last six years. I ask you, sir, is this the way to treat an independent voter? I believe, then [We put away our Johnson], I believe that I have shone the dergree and quality of this conspicuous folly which beleaves that yong men can be cramd like Turkies, and which threatems British independanse. But the comprodiction of the contry has goan foth agen the skeam; even the enthusiasm of its first primoters will become less vehement. It is Unenglish, and i agen repete it is Centrilisation, and can never become permently one of the institutions of our nativ land. i shall git my clarkship if I only bid my tim.

DAWN.

IN idle grief I sat and sighed,
 With folded hands, for love and light;
 But darkness brooded far and wide,
 And silence sealed the lips of night.
 And still, as blackness changed to grey,
 And star by star died out above,
 I wept my foolish heart away,
 And feebly sighed for light and love.

But, when the Alchymist on high
 Flashed into gold each ruddy streak,
 A new-born breeze, careering by,
 Leaped up and kissed me on the cheek;
 Then came a murmur from the plain,
 And music from the waving grove;
 And Earth to happy toil again
 Awoke with praise for light and love.

"I take it for a sign," I said,
 And rose like Lazarus from his grave;
 "Leave folded hands unto the dead,
 Leave sighing to the gally-slave:

For all the sighs from all the lands,
 And all the tears that men can weep,
 Could waft no love to folded hands,
 Could rain no light on wilful sleep.

"For, never-slumbering, to the morn
 Earth's earnest eyes for ever move;
 And from her million sons are borne
 No idle sighs for light and love.
 But labour, labour slays the night,
 And speeds the Day-god's chariot-wheels;
 Labour, love-given, fathers light;
 And light to labour love reveals."

Then, gathering up my newest sighs,
 I shaped therefrom a bark of air;
 With the last offerings from my eyes
 I freighted it, and called it "Prayer."
 Its sails were set, its masts were strong,
 Well-found in airy bolt and bar;
 I watched it as it surged along,
 And hid behind the morning star.

And, as I turned with braver tread
 Across the barren mountain side,
 Methought some whisperer softly said—
 "Go, labour thou, whate'er betide;
 Go, labour thou, and be content!
 Thy little bark, like Noah's dove,
 Shall seek thee when the day is spent,
 Deep-laden, then, with light and love."

EPIDEMICS.

IN some European towns, when pestilence has entered and will not be driven forth by prayers or genuflexions, the people take their saints from their shrines in the churches and flog them about the streets. Weary of fair words, which have occupied a great deal of time to no good result, they try what coercion will do; proving the medical inefficiency of incense they put their trust in stripes. If the wind should shift its quarter—if the sun should come down and cool the fiery air, or if the deluge should cease and the noxious vapours be all drawn up—whatsoever the atmospheric change that may alter the sanitary condition of the population, the glory is ascribed to the timely flagellation of the wooden saints in lace and satin; and the cause was whip-cord, not nature.

We laugh at this. We call it very childish and very shocking. We wonder at the pertinacity of superstition, and think that in this liberal nineteenth century it ought to be driven out of its fastnesses, ignorance and barbarism. We thank God that we are enlightened, and not as these men are; and then an omnipotent Government and an added Parliament vote a Fast Day, because cholera is raging in the land.

We find no fault with Fast Days as spiritual exercises: we merely object to their being placed in the room of deeds; and protest against the impious idea that because a man abstains from meats, and goes to church twice on a certain week-day, he should therefore be saved all further trouble about his open drains and uncleansed ditches; that, in

a word, we should charge the Majesty of Heaven with the cure of our own idleness, and call that a visitation from God, which is the result of human uncleanness and carelessness. Yet, in the face of all science and of all fact, it is still asserted that disease is a sign of Divine wrath, and not the consequence of certain fixed physical laws. An easier way of getting rid of responsibility and trouble than even the castigation of saints. What the fixed physical laws are, and how they are to be dealt with, Dr. Southwood Smith's Lectures on Epidemics will help us to understand.

One unvarying character of epidemics is, that they are all fevers. The Black Death of the fourteenth century, an aggravated form of the Oriental or Bubo plague, was a fever, deriving its name from effusions of black blood forming spots on the arms, face, and neck. The Oriental Plague, still in existence in Egypt and Eastern Europe, and the Sweating Sickness of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, were both fevers; and even the cholera of the present day, in the last or perfect stages of its development, is a fever. All the ordinary epidemics, such as typhus, scarlet fever, measles, and small-pox, are recognised fevers.

A second likeness of epidemics with each other is the extent of their rage. The Black Death extended from China to Greenland, desolating Asia, Europe, and Africa. The Bubo Plague often left its own region to spread westward and northward. In the fifteenth century it spread seventeen times over Europe to the most northerly countries. The Sweating Sickness burst out simultaneously in England, France, Germany, Prussia, Poland, Russia, Norway, and Sweden. It extended like a violent conflagration which spread in all directions; yet the flames did not issue from the focus, but rose up everywhere as if self-ignited. The influenza of the middle ages had a universal range; and, in our own day, we have seen it in almost every family of every city, then rush over the whole of Europe and leap the Atlantic to America. Alike in essential character, and in the extent of their range, epidemics are also alike in the rapidity of their course. The cholera of eighteen hundred and thirty-one extended in five days from Cairo, where it first appeared, over the whole of Lower Egypt; in eighteen hundred and thirty-two it made a bound from London to Paris, and in five days spread over four-fifths of the city. The influenza of eighteen hundred and forty-one flashed over London in one day, and upwards of five hundred thousand were struck. We have already seen that the earlier epidemics were as rapid as they were extensive.

Epidemics are generally preceded by two signs. One is the influenza. The plague, cholera, &c., have all been heralded by this disease. The first attack of cholera in

England was preceded by an outbreak of influenza, which resembled in the minutest particular that which ushered in the mortal Sweating Sickness of fifteen hundred and seventeen; and the cholera of eighteen hundred and forty-eight was preceded by the influenza of eighteen hundred and forty-seven. The other sign, Dr. Smith says, is "the general transformation of the type of ordinary diseases into the characteristic type of the approaching pestilence."

Epidemics are periodical. The first appearance of the Sweating Sickness was in fourteen hundred and eighty-five. It spread over England for a year, then disappeared. After a lapse of twenty years it broke out again, went over all its former haunts and after six months died away. In eleven years it came again, and again died away in six months; a fourth time it returned after a sleep of eleven years, continued six months, then disappeared. Its fifth and last visitation was after a period of twenty-three years. It raged—as it had raged before—in six months, as usual, disappeared; and, since then,—this was in fifteen hundred and fifty-one,—it has never been known in any country whatsoever. The Oriental plague breaks out in the East about every ten years; the fever epidemics of London occur every ten or twelve years; the Irish typhus epidemics have been decennial visitations for the last hundred and fifty years. Epidemic cholera remained with us fifteen months, on its first visitation. After sixteen years it broke out again, for exactly fifteen months, as before. Again—this time after only five years' absence—it came for seventeen months; coming earlier and staying longer than it had done before. According to this rule we may expect it again, after even a shorter absence.

Epidemics are rapid in their effects. Death generally occurs after a few hours: seldom, if the disease can be protracted. The great object of all modern treatment for cholera, for instance, is to gain time; for, if the disease does not kill at once, the patient will oftener recover than die, after a prolonged attack. It is the shock, rather than exhaustion, that destroys.

Lastly, epidemics are alike in cause. What may have produced one epidemic at one period, will produce another at another period: the difference consisting in the form and name, not in the cause. Over-crowding, filth, exhalations from foul sewers, rivers, ditches, canals, &c., putrescent animal or vegetable matter, impure drinking-water, unwholesome meat, decayed vegetables, unsound grain,—these are some of the predisposing personal causes of epidemics, which make all those living under such conditions more likely to be attacked than those in healthier circumstances. Of all predisposing causes foul air ranks as chief. We have several striking proofs of this in the late cholera.

At Tooting, thirteen hundred and ninety-five pauper children were crowded into a space which was large enough for only five hundred. Sixty-four of these children were attacked by cholera in one night; and in a week a hundred and eighty had died. This, because of overcrowding: and of the scanty allowance of one hundred cubic feet of air to each child, when five hundred cubic feet is the smallest quantity compatible with safety. In the Taunton workhouse there were two hundred and seventy-six inmates with sixty-eight cubic feet of air for each. Cholera carried off sixty in less than a week. In the county jail of Taunton, where the criminals were allowed from eight hundred and nineteen to nine hundred and thirty-five cubic feet of air, not a single case of cholera, nor even of diarrhoea, occurred. At East Farleigh, in Kent, one thousand people were assembled for hop-picking. They were lodged in sheds, and had about eighty cubic feet of air each to breathe. Ninety-seven were struck down by cholera, while in the same village another employer, who had provided proper accommodation for his work-people, did not lose one by the epidemic. All through the overcrowded streets of London, last year, the cholera ranged with violence; whilst in the more open spaces, other sanitary conditions being observed, not a case was recorded. People have often said that no difference can be detected in the analysis of pure and impure air. This is one of the vulgar errors difficult to dislodge from the public brain. The fact is, that the condensed air of a crowded room gives a deposit which, if allowed to remain for a few days, forms a solid, thick, glutinous mass, having a strong odour of animal matter. If examined by the microscope it is seen to undergo a remarkable change. First of all, it is converted into a vegetable growth, and this is followed by the production of multitudes of animalcules; a decisive proof that it must contain organic matter, otherwise it could not nourish organic beings. This was the result arrived at by Dr. Angus Smith, in his beautiful experiments on the Air and Water of Towns; wherein he showed how the lungs and skin give out organic matter, which is in itself a deadly poison, producing headache, sickness, disease, or epidemic, according to its strength. Why, if "a few drops of the liquid matter, obtained by a condensation of the air of a foul locality, introduced into the vein of a dog, can produce death with the usual phenomena of typhus fever," what incalculable evil must it not produce on those human beings who breathe it again and again, rendered fouler and less capable of sustaining life with each breath drawn! Such contamination of the air, and consequent hot-bed of fever and epidemic, it is easily within the power of man to remove. Ventilation and cleanliness will do all, so far

as the abolition of this evil goes, and ventilation and cleanliness are not miracles to be prayed for, but certain results of common obedience to the laws of God.

Besides this human contamination, the atmosphere itself undergoes changes which predispose it to the development and spread of epidemics. Inversions of the seasons, long droughts followed by heavy rains, mists, and every form of continuous damp combined with excessive heat, giving rise first, to inordinate growths of the lower species of vegetation, then to swarms of locusts, flies, caterpillars, frogs, &c., and, as the sequence of these antecedent conditions, dearth and famine. Such, in all ages, have been the signs and precursors of a coming year of pestilence. During our own cholera epidemic, the air has been observed to be wonderfully still and stagnant, both by day and night; and when the last plague visited Vienna, there had been no wind for three months. For several weeks, too, before the Great Plague of London, the air had been so calm, it could not stir a vane: and the "terrible outbreak of cholera at Kurrachee, was preceded for some days by such a stagnation of the atmosphere, that an oppression scarcely to be endured affected the whole population." A deficiency of electricity and a total absence of ozone are among other meteorological signs. Such atmospheric conditions as these, brooding over the lanes and courts of an uncleansed and over-populated city, must necessarily produce a burst of disease. Yet even then and thus, and notwithstanding the tremendous force of atmospheric influences, cleanliness, care, and forethought, can stop the spread, or even prevent the rise, of epidemics. Dr. Southwood Smith says, "where certain conditions exist, epidemics break out and spread; where those conditions do not exist, epidemics do not break out and spread; and where those conditions did exist, but have been removed, thereupon epidemics cease to break out and spread." Overcrowding, the accumulation of filth in and about all dwelling-places, personal uncleanness, improper food and impure water, stagnant ditches, foul drains, marsh lands, and the like, all these and other conditions of the same class, it is within the power of man to alter or remove.

The epidemics of the tropics differ somewhat from those of the temperate zones. There, where vegetation is so rank, and organic life so profuse—insects filling the lower strata of the atmosphere to the height of fifteen or twenty feet—epidemics are more violent and sudden than with us. The outbreak of cholera alluded to, in the Eighty-sixth regiment, at Kurrachee, in eighteen hundred and forty-six, was a striking instance of the fierce velocity of tropical epidemics. After a period of damp, hot, stagnant, and oppressive weather—for days not a breath of

air stirring—suddenly forty men were seized with cholera in one night. In two days more, two hundred and fifty-six had been attacked in all; of whom one hundred and thirty-one were already dead. We have had nothing like this in our cholera epidemics. Some epidemics are confined to particular latitudes; though most, after having been engendered in the tropics, pass onward to the north, without losing anything of their power. The yellow fever is the most definite in its range. Incapable of existing under either extreme of heat or cold—stopped by the blowing of a cool wind for only a few hours, and unknown under any other thermometrical readings than from between seventy-six and eighty-six degrees—as soon as it ceases its true form it is transformed to typhus; typhus commencing precisely at the line where yellow fever ends. This fact that certain epidemics are engendered by places and circumstances, not carried about by persons, is greatly insisted on, with a view to abolish all personal quarantine, where the climate renders the introduction of certain forms of disease impossible.

Better house arrangements, better food, improved cultivation of land, including especially drainage, and the cutting down of huge forests, wider streets, and better means of cleansing them—all these are among the reasons why civilisation is ranked as one of the great causes of amelioration in the type of epidemics, whether ordinary or extraordinary. That eternal myth of the Good Old Times fades into a very sorry reality when one looks at it narrowly! In the substitution of fresh for salt meat, and in the introduction of vegetables, our dietary table has infinitely reduced the chances of disease and mortality as compared with what they were in the Good Old Times. Even as late as the eighteenth century, fresh salads were sent from Holland for the table of Queen Caroline; and Sir John Pringle, writing in the middle of the last century, states that his father's gardener told him that in the time of his grandfather cabbages were sold for a crown a-piece. It was not until the close of the sixteenth century (fifteen hundred and eighty-five) that the potato was first brought to England, where it was limited to the garden for at least a century and a half after it had been planted by Sir Walter Raleigh in his own garden. It was first cultivated as a field-crop in Scotland in the year seventeen hundred and fifty-two.

We all know what sanitary effects result from the free use of fresh vegetables and fresh meat; so that, if we will but improve other things as much as we have improved our national diet, we may hope for the gradual extinction of epidemical disease. We have it in our own power. We hold the power, as we hold every faculty and privilege we possess, in trust from the Creator

of all things and all creatures. If we once fairly understand and learn the great lesson, that man can control nature, we shall then turn our time to better account. Industry, cleanliness, forethought, knowledge, above all such chemical and physiological knowledge as will teach us practical health, these are enemies to epidemics, and in a fair fight they must conquer. What a terrible reflection it is, to think that hundreds and thousands of our fellow-creatures have died preventible deaths, and that we are literally suicides and murderers from blind adhesion to ignorance and dirt!

MORE SUNDAYS ABROAD.

STILL on tramp toward the south we came to Dresden, and there rested five days; but as they were week-days their experiences gave us no insight into the Sunday usages of the place, and I only allude to them because it would seem unbecoming to pass the capital of Saxony without a word; and because I feel morally convinced that of all the art-wonders collected in the Zwinger, Das Grüne Gewölbe, and in the picture gallery, all of which we visited, not any of them are visible to the public on Sunday. On a sultry day in August we struggled, dusty and athirst, into Vienna. It is said that the first impressions of a traveller are the most faithful, and I therefore transcribe from a diary of that time some of my recollections of the first Sunday spent in the capital of Austria. It is not flattering:

"Yesterday (Sunday), we rambled through a part of the city known as Lerchenfeld, in the suburb of St. Joseph, where the low life of Vienna is exhibited. It was a kind of fair. The way was lined with petty booths and stalls, furnished with fruit, pipes, and common pastry. Here, were sold live rabbits and birds; there, paper clock-faces, engravings, wings, and figures of saints. In one part, was a succession of places of public resort, like our tea-gardens in appearance, but devoted to the sale of other beverages: tea being here almost unknown, except as a medicine. From each of them there streamed the mingled sounds of obstreperous music and human voices, while in several there appeared to be a sort of conjuring exhibition in course of performance. Further on, there came from the opposite side of the way the screaming of a flageolet, heard far above its accompaniment of a violin and a couple of horns, to all of which the shuffling and scraping of many feet formed a sort of dull bass, as the dancers whirled round in their interminable waltz. Looking into the window of the building thus outrageously conspicuous, we saw a motley crowd of persons of both sexes, and in such a variety of costumes as scarcely any other city but Vienna could furnish; some of them careering round in the excitement of the

dance, others impatiently awaiting their turn, or quizzing the dancers; while a third party sat gravely at the side-tables, smoking their pipes, playing at cards, and supping their wine and beer. Passing onward, we came upon a diminutive merryman screaming from the platform of his mountebank theatre, the nature of the entertainment and the lowness of the price of admission—"Only four kreutzers for the first place!"

"Continuing our course, we were attracted into a side-street by a crowd, among whom stood conspicuous a brass musical band, and an old man in a semi-religious costume of black and white, bearing a large wooden crucifix in his hand. In anticipation of some religious ceremony, we waited awhile to watch its development. It was a funeral, and the whole procession soon formed itself in the following order. First came the large crucifix, then a boy bearing a banner on which was painted the figure of the Virgin; then came six other boys, followed by the same number of girls, all neatly and cleanly dressed; and then the coffin, hung with scarlet drapery, adorned with flowers, and having a small silver crucifix at its head. We were told it was the funeral of a girl of thirteen. Close upon the coffin came the minister, or priest, clad in a black loosish gown, and wearing a curiously crown-shaped cap, also black. Every head was uncovered as he and the coffin passed. Then came, as we imagined, the real mourners of the dead, followed by six exceedingly old women, mourners by profession, and immediately behind them the brass band which had first attracted our attention. The latter, as soon as the procession was fairly in motion, burst forth into a noisy, and by no means melancholy strain, and continued to play for some time, until they suddenly ceased, and there was heard from some one at the head of the procession a Latin prayer, which was immediately echoed by the old women in the rear in the same drowsy, monotonous tone in which the church responses are usually made. The scene was altogether curious and striking; the progress of the procession was everywhere marked by uncovered heads and signs of sympathy and respect; but in spite of its attempted solemnity, there was a holiday appearance about it which jarred sadly with its real character of grief and death."

I have given this description a front place because it is the worst thing I can say of Vienna, and in no other part of the city did I ever see its like. During a stay of twelve months, I lost no opportunity of enjoying all that the Viennese enjoyed, or of witnessing whatever was part of the national customs in festival, holiday, or religious ceremonial. In addition to the Sundays—which were all, to a certain extent, days of rejoicing—there were nine distinct festivals in the year enjoined by the church, and on which, if they fell on week-days, the working people rested

from their labours. Of course each of these days had its special religious reference and obligations, and these were in general faithfully observed; but, apart from this, they were essentially holidays, and, as no deduction of wages was made by the employers on their account, they did not fall as a burden upon the working classes. These days were: New Year's Day, the Annunciation, Good Friday, Easter and Whit Sunday, Corpus Christi Day, All Saints' Day, the Birth of the Virgin, Christmas Day, and the festival of St. Leopold, the patron saint of Vienna. On the strictly church festivals, with the exception of All Saints' Day, theatrical performances, and public amusements generally, were interdicted, but rest and quiet recreation, in addition to the religious observances, were their great characteristics. Easter and Whit Monday were among the Volks Feste (people's feasts), as well as one known as that of the Brigittenau, from the place in which it is held, and another on the first of May, when the *läufer* (running footmen) have their races in the Prater, and the emperor permits himself to be mobbed—at least, the Emperor Francis did—as he strolls for a half-hour or so among his people in their own park. Then the Bohemians have a special religious festival, when one is astonished to see in out-of-the-way niches and corners a perhaps hitherto-unobserved figure of an amiable-looking priest, with a star on his forehead, now hung about and conspicuous with wreaths and festoons of flowers, and bright with the glittering of tiny lamps. This is the Holy St. John of Nepomuk. I have, however, nothing to do with the religious ceremonies of the Catholic Church. It is sufficient for my purpose to know that I watched the solemn and splendid procession of mingled royalty, priest, and people, on Corpus Christi Day, from the open door of a coffee and wine-house in the Kohl-market; and that, at the Easter festival, after ascending and descending the Mount Calvary, near Vienna, or rather having been borne up and down its semi-circular flight of steps, and past the modelled groups of painted figures to represent the life of Christ, from the birth to the crowning act of the crucifixion on the summit, I then sauntered away with my landlord (a cabinet-maker) and his family to Weinhaus, to drink of the new wine called *heuriger*. It is enough that, on All Saints' Day, after wandering awhile about a swampy churchyard in the suburb of Maria Hilf to see the melancholy spot of light which glimmered at each grave-head, I went to the Burg Theatre, and witnessed Shakespeare's play of King Lear (and the best actor in Vienna played the Fool); and further that I spent the evening of Christmas Day in Daum's coffee-house in reading Galgani's Messenger, in order to bring myself, in imagination at least, as near home as possible. The jewellers in Vienna are not such

elderly apprentices as they are in Ham-burgh, Leipsic, and the majority of small towns in Germany. They dine at gast-häuse, and sleep in the independence of a separate lodging. They have, therefore, more liberty; but there are many trades in Vienna among whom the old usages still exist, by which they become a kind of vassals, living and sleeping under the patriarchal roof. All worked twelve hours a-day alike, from six till seven, including one hour for dinner. Various licences were, however, allowed; quarter-of-day or half-hour deductions were scarcely known; and I have myself spent the morning at a public execution, without suffering any loss in wages. This brings me to the Sunday work; and I say unhesitatingly that, as a system, it does not exist. I never worked on the Sunday myself during my whole twelve months' stay. I do not know that there was any law against it; but rest was felt to be a necessity after a week of seventy-two hours' labour. It is not unusual, both in Germany and France, to engage new hands on the Sunday morning, because it is a leisure time, convenient to both master and workman; and I have sought for work at this time, and found the Herr in a silk dressing-gown, and white satin slippers with pink bows. I recollect visiting a working cabinet-maker's on one Sunday morning, whose men slept on the premises, and found the workshop a perfect model of cleanliness and order: every tool in its place, and the whole swept and polished up; and was once invited, under the impression that, as an Englishman, I ought to know something of newspaper presses, to inspect those of the Imperial Printing Office, with the last number of the Wiener Zeitung in type; and this was on a Sunday morning,—a time especially chosen on account of the absence of the workmen. My landlord, a master-man, would sometimes work in the morning, when hard pressed; but, if he did, he took his revenge in the week.

As we did not work, at what did we play? Perhaps there was a sick comrade to visit in the great hospital; and we paced the long corridors, and stepped lightly through the lofty wards to his bed-side. Or, if he were convalescent, we sought him out, among many others, in the open square, with its broad glass-plots and young trees, where, in his grey loose gown, he smoked a morning pipe. Or we went to church, I, with others, to the Evangelical Chapel near the Augustine Platz. There, among a closely-pressed throng, we heard admirable discourses (and not too long, the whole service being concluded in an hour), and heard much beautiful music; but, to my mind, there were too many tawdry ornaments in this place of worship—too many lamps about the altar; and the altar-piece itself—a gigantic figure of the Saviour on the Cross, said to be by Albert Dürer—seemed to be out of place.

It was lawful in Vienna to bathe on Sunday; and this we did, with great delight, in the public baths upon the Danube. Or we strolled about the Glacis; attended the miniature review in the Hof-Burg; wandered out as far as Am-Spitz, by the long wooden bridge over the broad and melancholy river; or, what was better, sauntered in some one of the beautiful gardens of the Austrian nobility,—those of Schwargenberg, Lichtenstein, or in the Belvidere—thrown open to the public, not only on Sunday, but on every day in the week.

As the day waned, music burst forth in many strains at once. There was a knot of artisans in our back room, who were learning the entire Czar and Zimmerman, and who were very vigorous about this hour. At seven, the theatres opened their doors with something of our own rush and press, although there was a guard-house, and a whole company of grenadiers in the ante-room; but, once in the interior, all was order and decorum. There was, of course, a difference in tone and character between the city and the suburban theatres, inasmuch as the ices and coffee of the court playhouses found their parallel in the beer and hot sausages of the Joseph-Stadt and Au-der-Wieden; but the performances of all rarely occupied more than two, and never exceeded three hours; and there was an amount of quiet and propriety manifested during the entertainment, which said something for the authorities, but more for the people.

As the night deepened, the ball-rooms and dancing-booths of Vienna,—the Sperl's, Das Taus Salon beim Schaf, and so downward to the dens of Lerchenfeld—grew furious in music, and hysterical in waltz. It was something fearful. It made your eyes twinkle, and your head dizzy, to see that eternal whirling of so many human teetotums. They seemed to see nothing, to feel nothing, to know nothing; there was no animation in their looks; no speculation in their eyes; nothing but a deadstare, as if the dancers were under a spell, only to be released when the music was at an end. Generally speaking, I think the ball-rooms of continental cities are the curses and abominations of the Sunday. My landlord, who was no moralist, but played laro, draughts, and billiards on the Sunday evening, would not hear of his daughter attending a public ball-room. There is a curious anomaly in connection with places of public entertainment which strikes a stranger at once, and which is equally true of Berlin as of Vienna; it is this: that, while private houses are closed at nine and ten o'clock, according to the season of the year, coffee-houses, taverns, dancing and concert-rooms, are open till midnight. Up to the former hours you may gain admission to your own house by feigning the porter to the extent of twopence; but, later than this, it is dangerous to try the experiment.

To return to out-of-door amusements. A visit to Schœnbrunn was business for a whole afternoon; for we must perforce each time unravel the windings to the pure spring in the maze, with vague and mysterious ideas of some time or other falling upon the grave of the Duc de Reichstadt, there secretly buried, according to popular tradition. On rare occasions we spent the whole of Sunday in some more distant palatial domain, or suburban retreat. In Klosternenburgh, with its good wine; in the Bruhl, with its rugged steepes, its military memorials, and ruined castles; at the village of Bertholdsdorf, with its Turkish traditions; among the viny slopes of the Leopoldiberg, or the more distant and wilder tract of mingled rock and forest which encircle the Vale of Helen. Above all, there was Laxenberg,—an imperial pleasure-palace and garden, and a whole fairy-land in itself, peopled by the spirits of ancient knights and courtly dames. Some one of the Hapsburgs had built, many years ago, a knightly castle on a lake, and in it were stored dim suits of armour of Maximilian; a cabinet of Wallenstein, grim portraits of kings and warriors; swords, halberds, jewelled daggers, and antique curiosities innumerable; only rather prosaically completed by the exhibition of the every-day suit of the last Emperor of Austria, which, however affecting a spectacle for a simple-hearted Viennese—and they are mere babies in matters of royalty—irresistibly reminded one of Holywell Street, London, and cast-off regimentals. Laxenberg is distant less than a shilling ride, and about two hours' walk from Vienna; and, like our Hampton Court Palace, is thrown unreservedly open to the public. There were no end to its wonders: fishing-grounds, and boats upon the lake; waterfalls, and rustic bridges were there; and one little elegant pavilion, perched on the water, dedicated to the beauties of Windsor, illustrating its scenery in transparent porcelain. There was a list for knightly riders; a dais for the Queen of Beauty; and places for belted nobles, saintly abbots, and Wambas in motley: an Ashby-de-la-Zouch in miniature, which a little imagination could people. Then, for the plebeians, there were leaping-bars and turning-posts, skittle-alleys, and the quintain; and, for all alike, clusters of noble trees, broad grassy meads, and flowers unnumbered. There was even a farm-house, homely and substantial, with dairy and poultry-yard, sheep in the paddocks, and cattle in the stalls.

We started from Vienna on a Sunday morning on board the steamboat Karl for Linz; and trudging thence on foot came on the following Saturday night into Salzburg, the queen of the Salzack. We rested here one happy Sunday: not so much in the town, which had its abundant curiosities, as in the pleasure gardens of the old archbishops of

Salzburg, at an easy stroll from it. This garden is pleasant enough in itself, but there are besides a number of water eccentricities in it such as I should think were in their peculiar fashion unequalled. Here blooms a cluster of beautiful flowers, covered as it were by a glass shade, but which turns out to be only water. There a miniature palace is in course of erection, with crowds of workmen in its different storeys, each man at his avocation with hammer and chisel, pulley and wheel, and the grave architect himself directing their labours. All this is set in motion by water, and is not a mere doll's house, but a symmetrical model. Then we enter a subterranean grotto, with a roof of pendant stalactites, where the pleasant sound of falling waters and the melodious piping of birds fill all the air. There is a sly drollery too in some of the water performances, invented years ago by the grave archbishops of Salzburg; for suddenly the stalactites are set dripping like a modern shower bath: and the gigantic stags at its entrance spout water from the very tips of their horns. The garden is not a Versailles, for there is nothing grand in any of its hydraulic arrangements; but in the beauty with which are clothed such trifles, the artistic spirit which has suggested its objects, and the humour which spirits up tiny jets of water by seats where lovers sit, and in unsuspected places where the public congregate, even in the middle of a walk, it is a wonderful and delightful exhibition. This garden was thronged by the holiday folks of Salzburg. There was an official to explain the curious display, and nothing but innocent gaiety was to be seen.

The Sunday we spent in Munich was passed in the Kirche Unserer Lieben Frauen, with its self-supporting roof; in the English Garden; and at a lovely spot on a hill-side, in the environs of the city. During the week, we were escorted by a friend to a sort of tea-gardens of some notoriety, but found it silent and deserted. Our friend apologised for its dulness, but exclaimed, in part explanation, "You should see it on Sunday!" It was evident that Sunday was a day of rest and enjoyment, and not a working-day in Munich. My own impression of the Munichers was, that they drank too much beer every day in the week.

Still tramping towards France, we passed one Sunday in Heidelberg, among all its romantic wonders; but as everybody knows, or ought to know, all about Heidelberg, I will not allow my enthusiasm to lead me into a description which would not be novel, and might probably be tedious. This was the last Sunday we spent on German ground. So far as Germany is concerned, you may look upon everything but museums, picture galleries, and the like, on Sunday; you may, as Luther says you ought, "dance on it, ride on it, play on it, do anything"—but see that which is most likely to instruct

you. You may visit tawdry shows, and inspect badly painted scenery; you may let off fireworks; gamble to your ruin; smoke the eyes out of your head, and dance the head off your shoulders; but you shall not look upon works of art, or the results of science in museums and picture-galleries. Let it be said, however, that the general opportunities for acquiring correct and elevated taste are, on the whole, greater in Germany than in England; and that in many cities there is a profusion of exterior ornament, more especially in Munich, in the shape of the fresco-paintings of the Palace Garden, on Isar Thar, in the Basilica and churches generally, so that the eye is better educated in artistic combinations; and the same necessity does not exist for especial art instruction with them as with us. Then, let us never forget that their public and other gardens are as free to them as the air they breathe, and that music is almost as universal.

The remembrances I have of Paris Sundays decidedly possess a character of rest and recreation; of waking in the morning to a grateful sense of repose; of clean shirts and trimmed beards; and of delicious breakfasts at our Café aux Quatres Mendiants, of coffee and white bread, instead of the bouillon and confiture of the atelier. Did we not work, then? Assuredly we did sometimes, when hard pressed; but the recollection of those few occasions is drowned in that of a flood of happy, tranquil Sundays. When we did work it was from eight till twelve, which made half a day, and this was the rate at which all overtime was reckoned. One hard taskmaster I remember, who, instead of paying us our dues, as is the custom on Saturday night, at the end of quinze jours, cajoled us to come and work under the promise of their payment on the Sunday morning. He failed us like a rogue; and we drudged on for another quinzaine, Sunday mornings included, in hopeful anticipation of the receipt of our wages. When we found that he slunk out of the way, without paying us a sou, we rebelled, sang the Marseillaise, demanded our wages, and never worked another Sunday.

I am lost in my endeavours to define the mingled recollections of Sunday tranquillity, enjoyment, and frivolity during a stay of eighteen months in Paris. My thoughts run from the Madelaine to Minu-montant; from Versailles to the Funambule; from Diogenes' lantern at St. Cloud to the blind man's concert in the Palais Royal. Sometimes I wander over the plains of Anteuil and Passy; then suddenly find myself examining a paper-making machine in the Museum of Arts and Trades. Or I look over the vine fields from the heights of Montmorency at one moment, and the next am pacing the long galleries of the Louvre, or the classic chambers of the

Palais des Beaux Arts. I have passed a Whitsunday morning at Versailles among the paintings; the afternoon at Sèvres among glass and porcelain; have won a game at dominoes after dinner in Paris; and have heard the last polka at the Salle Vivienne in the evening. Paris is a city of extremes; the young Théophile who works by my side, and is an ingenious fellow and a clever workman, you will meet next Sunday in the Louvre discoursing energetically on the comparative merits of the French and Italian schools of painting; yet this same Théophile shall be the Tite of the gallery of the Porte St. Martin in the evening who yells slang at his friend on the opposite side; and the Pierrot or Débardeur of the next opera masquerade.

With the vivid impressions of many Sundays abroad upon my mind, I have been wondering whether, after all, the practices of the continental Sunday have anything to do with the opening of a museum or picture-gallery in London; and, after profound study, in the laborious course of which I have several times fallen asleep, I have come to the deliberate conclusion that there is connection between the two things. In the first case, as regards Germany, seeing that they there sedulously close all that relates to art or science, and give full licence only to beer and tobacco, to music and dancing on the Sunday—where is the parallel? In the second, as regards France or Paris, although it must be admitted that there is unfortunately no comparison between the Louvre and the National Gallery, it can at least be claimed that there is no resemblance between the British Museum and the Bal des Chiens in the Rue St. Honoré. I take it that to preserve the English Sunday as a day of greater rest than French or German Sundays everywhere, and to add to it such rational and instructive recreation as a Museum or a Picture Gallery, or a place of innocent recreation could supply, might be a good thing in the eyes of religious men; and I have not yet heard of any society or association in any part of the United Kingdom, which proposes to open a Sunday evening ball at the Pig and Tinder-box, or to grant licences to the theatrical performances at the Penny Gaff in the New Cut.

MR. ROWLANDS.

It is now some six or seven years since I first made acquaintance with the village of Hurstfield. I don't know that it has any particular beauty of site or neighbourhood to distinguish it from other places in Hampshire. It has the same pure air, the same rich country all round—for it lies far away from the pastoral and romantic part of the county,—but it has no fine views, no show houses, nothing, in short, but what every English hamlet can boast of in an equal degree,—and yet I like it better than the most picturesque situation in the world; the

better than crowded watering-places on the sea, or swarming retreats upon the lakes. Hurstfield is ugly, lonely, deserted,—and very cheap. Once upon a time a dozen four-horse coaches passed through it every day. There were horns heard as the watchful guard caught the first glance of the Buffalo Inn. Horses were changed in less than a minute, the luxurious Jehu smoking his cigar, and never descending from the box. Horns with a different tone were sounded at a later hour, when the up Highflyer stopped at the Buffalo to dine. Landlady, barmaid, and waiters formed a corps of honour to receive the dining coach. The insides tumbled out, and the outsides tumbled down; and in hungry hurry and confusion, all tumbled in and took seats without ceremony, at the well-spread table. How so much food could be disposed of in fifteen minutes, and how such a charge could be made for cold meat and stale bread, were equally puzzling question to landlord and traveller; but neither party stopped to discuss them. The stuffed and infuriated passenger paid his three-and-sixpence, and resumed his place, thinking he had been robbed; the grumbling landlord looked at the diminished size of a round of beef as if he had been grievously wronged. But horns were heard no more, either with rapid note demanding a change of horses, or with more genial voice giving warning to get the dishes on the table. The last dinner was eaten; the last coach disappeared. Hurstfield grew into a really quiet, out-of-the-way village,—the Buffalo ceased to be an inn, except in a very small portion of its former self. The right wing was converted into a separate dwelling-house, the left wing was used as a barn, and the Buffalo, with tremendous tail and gilded horns, swung on the centre part of the ancient hostelry, and still held out a promise of good entertainment for man and beast. And not in vain. There was still a stall or two in the stable, and just above the sign-board was a suite of rooms, so calm, so cool, so bright, that they formed a wonderful contrast to the dingy apartments which it was my fate to occupy for ten months of the year in town—and the maid was so active, and so pleasant to look upon, and the landlady was a widow, and quite accommodated to her fallen fortunes,—so motherly and attentive, that before I had been established in the rooms a week, I felt at home. To an Englishman, especially if he has travelled abroad, or if he has inhabited a London lodging, that word expresses all. I felt at home, and that is the reason I prefer Hurstfield to the most picturesque and aristocratic residence in England. How I walked from village to village, guided across the low levels by the tapering spires of some old churches, and sometimes cheered in my progress by the pleasant sound of their bells. How beautifully those grey old towers rise, clear and solemn in the calm evening air, and seem so

fitted to their position that a church in a great roaring dirty London street seems by contrast entirely out of place. But a truce to walks and steeple-chases such as I have mentioned. The proper study of mankind is man, so I invited the surgeon of Hurstfield to dinner. The place of the ancient barber, both in regard to phlebotomy and garrulity, is supplied by the modern village doctor. This was a very good specimen of the tribe. He knew everybody far and near,—and all professionally—not that he had attended on the innumerable families he named—but his memorials of them consisted of the illnesses they had gone through, and the accidents they had met with. The Smiths of Yewston, were very delightful people—three of the young ladies had had the scarlet fever three years ago. The Browns of Elm Lodge, wonderfully clever,—the eldest daughter had had the small-pox, but it left no mark. Robinson of Bowdan was one of the best Hebrew scholars in England, and had broken his leg—a compound fracture—seven years before. When he came nearer home he was more diffuse in his medico-personal anecdotes. He told me the number of times the grocer's wife had been bled. The curate must have been a favourite with his physician, for he was described as an admirable preacher, and subject to inflammation of the liver. And one man he told me of (he was sure I must have seen him) an old man very meanly dressed, who walked for hours on the shady side of the road opposite my window. You would almost think he was a gentleman,—perhaps he was—he was miserably poor and very proud, and despised medicine altogether. My friend had pressed a box of pills upon him, had begged him to accept a small phial of Gregory's Mixture; but the independent pauper (so Sangrado, in his indignation, called him) told him to throw physic to the dogs, he would have none of it; "A very impudent thing to say, sir, as if I were a veterinary surgeon."

I had seen the man. There was something in his appearance that struck me, a sort of respectability run to seed, but with no loss of personal dignity (as if the man felt the inconvenience of poverty, but none of the degradation), which made me resolve to make his acquaintance.

"You'll find him a queer man, sir," said the doctor. "I believe he was born in this parish, of a highly honourable family. They've all passed away. I believe he hasn't a shilling, but he's as lofty as ever. Gregory's Mixture would be excellent in his stomach, for he complains of indigestion, and says it is on that account he never tastes animal food. I guess," continued this delicate-minded practitioner, with a chuckling laugh, as he poured out another glass of sherry,— "I guess there's another reason for his abstinence, and that his indigestion would be greatly alleviated by a pound of beef-

steaks. His name, sir? His name is Rowlands—no profession—no money—he sleeps somewhere above the stable of the Buffalo—and has a Latin Virgil in his pocket—a queer man, sir, and I should say not quite right up here.” Esculapius touched his forehead, and finished the bottle.

Next day I joined Mr. Rowlands in his walk. If he had been the great Sully retired to the Château of Rosny, taking his exercise, followed by his hundred halberdiers, he could not have been more unlike the pauper he had been described. He was easy, dignified, courteous. I scarcely knew how to begin my conversation; but the gentleman shone upon me from the midst of his rags: from under that tattered old hat: from forth of those patched shoes and terribly worn-out gaiters—like Louis the Fourteenth encouraging a modest débutant at his court. He spoke of the scenery, of the town, of the people. He found out I had not forgotten my classics. We were on familiar ground at once: he talked, and criticised, and quoted. He was Virgilian to the back-bone; I was Horatian to the bottom of my heart. The man glowed with enthusiasm. He forgot his sixty-seven years, his bed of straw in the loft, his crumpled shirt, his mended coat; and so did I. Bayard would have been without fear and without reproach, if set up as a scarecrow in a cornfield. Chatham would have been stately, if dressed like an Irish reaper. Mr. Rowlands was a delightful companion, though he might have excited suspicion in the heart of an officer of the Mendicity Society. How had he come into this condition? How had a man so evidently cultivated and refined sunk into a state which an inhabitant of the poor-house would not envy? Had he gambled, drunk, cheated? The man’s whole mind and manner put any of these suppositions out of the question. I determined to ask him the particulars of his past life; but you might as well have asked the Duke of Wellington to tell you the plans of a campaign. There was a formality in the midst of all his politeness that kept you from familiarity; and I had known him several weeks; we had walked together a dozen times; he had dined with me often; and yet I never ventured to trench upon what all men, except fools, keep sacred, as if it were a tomb—the joys or sufferings of his youth. Let people talk as much as they like of the balls they have attended, the great folks they have seen, the friends they have conversed with—they are only agreeable companions in describing such scenes as these; but when a man or woman begins to lay before you the secrets of the heart: the agonies of the broken spirit: the shock of the death-bed: the pangs of unrequited or fickle love: don’t trust them; there is no sincerity in their feelings; there is no solidity in their character. There are certain relics that must never be taken out of the shrine. When exposed to public gaze be sure they

are only common pieces of wood; thorny crowns that never pressed the brow; nails that never touched the cross.

How long my ignorance of my old friend’s adventures might have continued I cannot say. I don’t think I ever could have brought myself to put the pistol-interrogative to his breast, and bid him stand and deliver; but a certain fortunate day brought with it the revelations I dared not to ask. And there were no adventures after all. He never was in love with a marquis’s daughter, or fought a duel with a fair young lady’s brother,—a prosaic life as ever I read, and yet redeemed from the common-place of biography by a new method of consolation under his griefs unknown to Boethius: a consolation which, in a differently-constituted mind, would have added to the pains of regret; but which, enabled poor old Rowlands to bear up against the disappointments of his career and the advancing discomforts of age and want.

We were sitting at the open window one evening, occasionally observing the smoke of our cigars, as it floated gracefully into the open air, or curled like a dark-coloured halo between the golden horns of the Buffalo, when that obese and frisky animal ceased from its swing, as if tired out with its exertions, “You wonder how I contrive to be so lively and contented,” said Mr. Rowlands, “under all these suits and trappings of woe; but there is nothing strange in it when looked at philosophically. I am as poor as poor can be. In fact there is no word in the language to express how poor I am, except the dreadful one of actual destitution. That has not come yet; but it is coming; and when it does, why, after all, what worse off shall I be then than now? My freedom may be a little interfered with; but I am old now, and don’t care much for walking. My dress will be of a different make and colour, but what matter? I have not been a dandy for forty years; and I may perhaps be as happy in my beadsman’s gown, as his lordship in cloth of gold.”

I made a movement to speak. “I know what you are going to say,” he said, “and I believe you are sincere; but a life must have its course. It has gone on hitherto exactly as I knew it would. Don’t stop its current—don’t turn it aside: a poor-house pallet—a pauper’s grave—and he will also have his appointed end.”

“Who?” I said.

“Ah! there I must let you a little into my secret,” replied the old man, and smiled. “I mean his lordship. I mentioned him this moment—myself.”

I looked for an instant at his face, and he laughed outright.

“O, no, I’m not mad,” he said; “not even flighty. I don’t believe in ghosts, though I have read stories which must make the most sceptic pause. I don’t believe in German Doppelgangers, or haunted men, and yet—

and yet," he said, after a pause, "his lordship and I are never apart."

I looked again incredulous, and he laughed again.

"Did you ever read the beautiful apologue of the choice of Hercules?" he said. I bowed.

"Well, all men have the same chance given them as the son of Almena. Some choose the good, some the evil; that is to say, in our modern phrase, some choose the way of success in life, and some the way of misfortune. I chose both."

"You could scarcely walk in both—at the same time," I said, waiting for the explanation of the riddle.

"O, yes, I did; they are not widely separated; they are always in sight of each other. It is pleasant to stand in the low way of poverty and disappointment, and look at the brilliant appearance presented on the upper road. It is like a beggar looking at the carriages in Hyde Park of a Sunday. With me the roads separated at school, when I was fifteen; and they have run parallel and therefore inconjoinable ever since. Since that time, I have always clearly before my eyes two figures,—one is the man I am, the other the man I might have been. I have traced the career of the second personage as clearly as that of the first. It is a great comfort to me; I rejoice in his success as if it were my own; and what matters it, whether I go into the union or not. Is not he in the House of Lords? Why should I complain of being useless, cast aside, despised? Isn't he the advocate of reform; the corrector of vice; the friend of the destitute? honoured for his virtues? revered for his wisdom?"

"I was the cleverest boy at the greatest of the English schools. Before I was sixteen my talents had attracted notice in many quarters outside the college walls. A tall man with pursed up lips and frigid expression, stood next the king at one of the examinations. I was the hero of the day. George the Third spluttered out, 'Good boy, good boy! clever, eh? very clever!' a hundred times, pretending he understood what was going on. The tall gentleman said nothing till he was going away. He then took me by the hand, told me to go on with my studies, but not to neglect contemporary affairs. 'If I am in power three years hence, come to me; this introduction will suffice.' Mr. Pitt stalked away and I never saw him again. At the end of three years, I saw very clearly what I ought to do; but I didn't do it. I wandered through the fields with a book in my hand. I was shy,—proud, perhaps; 'if he remembers me,' I said, 'he will make inquiry; if he has forgotten me, he will order me out of his room.' But the gentleman I told you of—the man I might have been—went to Downing Street on his nineteenth birthday. He took Mr. Pitt by the hand; he said I have done as you advised.

To gain the privilege of visiting you thus, I have studied night and day. What further command do you give me? Pitt smiled; advised him to go to college, to practise oratory, to control his poetic fancies sufficiently to make them the embellishment of his oratory, not the employment of his life.

"And my profession?" inquired the youth.

"The bar. It will accustom you to the use of your weapons. But come to me often. I give no commands; we will take counsel together, and decide what is to be done."

"Meanwhile, I fell in love. My father had left me five thousand pounds. I thought two hundred and fifty pounds a-year a fortune for a prince. So did Mary Lambert,—and when I was three-and-twenty we married. She was nineteen. She had been very poor all her life, and believed our income would last for ever. She had never had handsome clothes. She dressed like a princess; I liked her better in the russet gown she used to wear, when I courted her at her father's farm, and helped her over the stile with the milk-pails. She was very beautiful, and could scarcely read. She did not see the use of books, but was always so delighted to show her new gowns, her fashionable bonnets, her Indian shawls, to her former equals, that she spent our year's income in a milliner's shop, and we went rapidly into debt. I had my own resources, and read more than ever. I tried even to compose, but never could please myself with my work. I threw away a novel before it was half-finished, a poem at the fifth stanza, a political pamphlet before I had arranged the arguments,—and contented myself with listening to the applause bestowed on the protégé of Mr. Pitt. His first speech in parliament—he was a member for a family borough—was a miracle. His paper on French aggression (the one I did not write) was thought the finest political work since Burke on the Revolution. Pitt died, and he was called out of Westminster Hall, and established in Downing Street. At this time I left the comfortable house we had lived in since our marriage; the expense of our establishment was too great. I had now a child, a daughter of six years' old, and I regretted our extravagance for her sake. We had run through more than half our principal, and I insisted on retrenchment. My wife did not comprehend the word, but bought new gowns, though in the out-of-the-way place I fled to, there was no one to admire their beauty. She clothed Matilda, in lace and satin. She loved me with all her heart; but never understood that it was possible for a man to love his wife, and yet refuse her a velvet cloak at two guineas a-yard. She thought I disliked her; she was sure I hated the child; I adored them both, and they had each a mantle of Genoa pile, and we had now but ninety pounds a-year. But young Rowlands, of the

Treasury sufficed for all. He had married the only daughter of the noble lord who had given him his first seat. His eloquence was still the shield of the ministry, and there was no elevation he might not hope to attain. He had energy, strength of will, perseverance. He had no bashfulness nor awkward distrust of his own powers. His wife was a paragon of beauty, a patroness of Almack's,—his child, a miracle of loveliness and health, Matilda was as beautiful as his Charlotte—the queen was her godmother—and dressed as an Arcadian shepherdess with petticoat of finest silk, and flesh-coloured silk stockings, visible up to the knee, was a model for Bernard Palissy; but her apparel, I suppose, though very exquisite to look at, was not warm enough for a bleak cottage in Yorkshire—and she caught cold. A doctor was instantly summoned. He came from Scarborough, at a guinea a mile. The mother grew distracted, took a fever from waiting on her child, and blamed me, in her delirium, as the murderer of her darling, by refusing to send to London for the body-physician of the king. I watched them both: there was no hope; we had not paid the rent of the house; the landlord was pressing. I had no money left—fees, medicine, gowns and living had swallowed all. We had but one tallow candle in the room where the two were dying. I was the only watcher. I sat with a hand of each locked in mine.

“Do you love your father, my child?” I said.

“O yes, papa, better than all the world.”

“And you, my wife?”

“Yes—dearly—”

“How lonely you will be,” said my daughter, “without us both!”

“And how poor!” said my wife.

“And then daylight peeped in at that small chamber.

“I was indeed poor and very lonely. But Rowlands up in London was very gay. He had just been created a baronet, and his father-in-law had left him eight thousand a-year. Sitting by the side of that trundle-bed, listening to the sighings and sobs of the two dearest and last of my possessions, I heard also the strains of music at a ball in Portman Square. Miss Rowlands had just come out, the exact image of my Matilda—there was no difference there—and danced with a duke of twenty-two. They were a beautiful couple; and she looked so strong, so happy, and so healthy, that it was very difficult to turn away and gaze on the still, cold features of my poor Matilda—her closed eyes and folded hands.

“I lived for some years, sir, I know not how. I think I must have been tutor to somebody, or have kept a school; but I was principally concerned with the progress of the Secretary

for Home Affairs—what plans of improvement he proposed, how he insisted on simplifying the law, on promoting merit, or on raising the people! All these were aspirations of my own; but I was shy, I was powerless, I never could gain a patron; I could only think and dream. A small legacy was left me; I came down here; some of the money is not yet spent. I have a few books; I have many recollections. I am very happy; and Rowlands is Lord Oakland—the name of our old estate which he bought back some years ago—and they say is looking out for the blue ribband.”

When I came down to Hurstfield in the following year, the play was played out. He was in the Union workhouse, and, I was told, was dying. I went to see him, and found him in the ward appropriated to the sick. There were several beds ranged against the wall. I suppose they took me for the doctor when I entered, for they all looked at me with expectation. On finding their mistake, they resigned themselves sulkily to their pillows again, and took no notice of what I did. I went to the old man's bed. He smiled when he saw me. “I thought you would come,” he said; “you said you came to Hurstfield every August, and I knew you would not forget me. I told you how it would be. I would not let you interfere. I wanted to work out the great proposition, and to prove that idleness ends here. Point out to your friends the difference between the lives of myself and Oakland. We are both dying—for since I came here his lordship has been very ill. I look round me, and see strange faces, unanswering eyes. I experience neglect, and have none to watch me—the human feelings get all dried up here—but his lordship,” he said, “how hard he breathes! he can't last long; but see what comforts he has round his bed. He has his wife, his child; and these fair sunny-haired boys and girls, these are his grand-children. He needn't regret the course he has run. It is this that must give comfort to us both: I have none of my own to fly to. Give me your hand, sir; you have been very kind. Hark! a muffled peal! They are ringing the death-chime in the surrounding parishes for the Earl of Oakland,—and hark again! there is the passing bell! It is for the poor old pauper, Rowlands.”

And so it was. I attended his funeral, and walked home with the village doctor. “A very dull, obstinate old man, sir,” he said, by way of epitaph, “as ever I saw in my life. He refused all assistance from his friends. He determined to be an inmate of the house; and—would you believe it, sir?—to the very last he refused all my medicine, and insulted me over and over with his absurd allusion to dogs.”

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TIME'S SPONGE.

THERE are a few curiosities of our existing criminal law that wait to be, as Sir Matthew Hale would say, laid flat. A good many have been laid flat since his time; for that famous Judge and Historian of the Pleas of the Crown lived in Stuart days, and died in the year sixteen hundred and seventy-six. A great many, he tells us, had been laid flat when he lived; for instance, it had ceased to be felony and death to sell a horse to a Scotchman.

Jack Cade, if Shakespeare knew his mind, meant that when he was king it should be felony to drink small beer; and that, we may say, looking at some actual cases, would have been no great sharpening of law. We have now not more executions in the country every year than used to be provided often in a single morning only. Seventy or eighty years ago, there were never less than a dozen culprits hung in a row after every Old Bailey sessions; and Townsend, the Bow Street runner, said that he remembered a sessions of seventeen hundred and eighty-three, when Serjeant Adair was Recorder, after which forty were hanged at two executions. In earlier time, the lightest heed was taken of the punishment of death. It was no rare and solemn sentence, but staple judicial routine, that might be enlivened with a joke when possible, to colour its monotony. Thus, Lord Bacon tells of his father Sir Nicholas, that when appointed a Judge on the northern circuit, "He was by one of the malefactors mightily importuned for to save his life; which, when nothing he had said did avail, he at length desired his mercy on account of kindred, 'Prithee,' said my Lord Judge, 'how came that in?'—'Why, if it please you, my lord, your name is Bacon, and mine is Hog; and in all ages Hog and Bacon have been so near kindred, that they are not to be separated.'—'Ay, but,' replied Judge Bacon, 'you and I cannot be kindred except you be hanged; for Hog is not Bacon until it be well hanged.'"

Of course crime was not lessened by extreme severity. As for the punishment of death, Mr. Harmer, a great gaol solicitor, said, in his evidence before the Criminal Law Commission, "In the course of my experience,

I have found that the punishment of death has no terror on a common thief. I have very often heard thieves express their great dislike of being sent to the House of Correction, or the hulks, but I never heard one say that he was afraid of being hanged." Mr. Amos, Downing Professor of the Laws at Cambridge (upon whose recent very interesting sketch, *Ruins of Time Exemplified* in Sir Matthew Hale's History of the Pleas of the Crown, this article is wholly founded), suggests also the case of a person in a respectable station of life, who lived during the last century in Holborn Court, Gray's Inn, and was for a long time in the habit of breaking open and robbing chambers in the Inns of Court, without any suspicion attaching to him. It is remarkable that, during this period, he always went to Abingdon's coffee-house, in Holborn, on an execution-day, to see from thence the prisoners pass by in their carts to Tyburn. At no other time did he frequent that coffee-house.

The result of ordering men to do what they will not, or cannot do, is, when action of some kind is enforced, commonly absurd. The law used to compel jurymen, if they acquitted any accused man of murder, not merely to acquit him, but to name the guilty person. Whenever they could not do this to the satisfaction of their consciences, the juries declared that the real murderer was John-a-Noakes. That person of whom we speak so often as Jack Noakes in friendly tones, has been declared guilty by jury after jury of a series of horrible atrocities. Away with him, then! Let him be laid flat! When larcenies were grand and petty, and a few shillings more or less in the value of a stolen article made the question one of life or death to the thief; juries used, in the most open way, to deal in what were called by Blackstone pious perjuries. It was a common thing for them to find that five-pound-notes, or ten-pound-notes of the Bank of England, were articles of the value of twelve pence, four shillings and sixpence, or twenty-nine shillings, as the humanity of the case required. In fact, the result of the too great stringency of law was a great laxity of practice, illustrated in the happiest way by the bleachers, who petitioned parliament to PROTECT them by withdrawing the capi-

tal punishment of stealing from bleaching-grounds.

Numerous, then, as the executions used to be, they did not represent a tithe or hundredth part of the amount of what was pronounced capital crime; nor the number of persons who were sentenced to death without the smallest intention of hanging them. We never were so savage as our laws have sometimes been. A short time before the abolition of capital punishment for stealing to the amount of forty shillings in a dwelling-house, Lord Kenyon sentenced a young woman to death for that offence: whereupon she fainted, and the judge, in great agitation, exclaimed, "I don't mean to hang you! Will nobody tell her, I don't mean to hang her?" Of the pious perjurers, who does not feel that the chief crime was in the law, not in the administrator, and that the law must bear the heaviest weight of Sir Samuel Romilly's objection to the "looking upon the evasion of our criminal laws with so much favour, as to regard the profanation of the name of God in the very act of administering justice to men, as that which is in some degree acceptable to the Almighty, and as partaking of the nature of a religious duty!"

There used to be—as we suppose, there are still—a great many delicacies in the laws having reference to homicide and burglary; but in Sir Matthew Hale's time, the knotty question of what was passable Latin for burglarious and burglar in the framing of indictments, was THE delicacy of the season. More offenders escaped by the writing of burgariter, or burgenter, for burglariter, than by proof of innocence; but, although these errors were common and fatal flaws in an indictment, it was ruled that burglariter was good Latin enough to serve the purposes of law.

Dipping very much at random into the amusing law sketch of Professor Amos, we fall upon some of the subtleties of homicide. Accidental homicide, if it arose out of the doing of a lawful act, was held excusable; if it arose out of a trespass, not a larceny, was manslaughter; but if it arose out of a larceny, was murder. Thus Mr. Eden put the case a hundred years ago: "A man, shooting at a bird, and not using proper and ordinary caution to prevent danger, unfortunately happeneth to kill his neighbour. The guilt of this man, in the eye of our law, and, consequently, the proportion of his punishment, will depend, partly on the nature, shape, and size of the bird; and partly on the intention of the man with respect to the bird; but will have no connection whatever with the act of homicide. If the bird chanceth in evidence to prove a wild pigeon, no man's property, it will be excusable homicide; if a tame fowl, and shot at for the amusement or improvement of the marksman, it will be felonious and manslaughter, because an un-

lawful trespass on the property of another; lastly, if the bird were private property, and intended to be stolen, which must be collected from the circumstances, it will be murder." Hobbes, the philosopher, living in Hale's time, expressed the law in this form: "If a boy be robbing an apple-tree, and by some chance fall therefrom, and break the neck of a man standing underneath, the crime consists in a trespass, to the damage, perhaps, of sixpence. Trespass is an offence, but the falling is none, and it was not by the trespass, but by the falling, that the man was slain; yet Coke would have him hanged for it, as if he had fallen of malice prepense."

There was a case which combined, in a suggestive way, questions of homicide and burglary. A servant who had attempted to murder his master by giving him fifteen wounds with a hatchet, but without killing him, was convicted and executed; not for attempted assassination, but for constructive burglary, because, in order to enter his master's chamber, he had been obliged to lift up the latch of a door.

It has been argued, and we are not sure whether it ever was completely settled, whether it was burglary to break a cupboard open; and, of course, when the punishment of felony was death, such a case as the following was serious:—Some servants in husbandry, left in charge of their master's team, entered his granary by means of a false key, and took out of it two bushels of beans which they gave to his horses. Out of eleven judges three were of opinion that this was no felony; eight ruled for a conviction, some of the eight formally alleging that the robbery by the accused men was for their own gain, because by better feeding of the horses, their own labour would be lessened.

The idle subtleties that have been spent by criminal lawyers upon the subject of theft, could scarcely be seen to more advantage than in the consideration of that element in thieving, which consists in carrying the stolen thing away; or, as the books called it, the *asportavit*. Thus it was held that if a prisoner removed a package from the head to the tail of a waggon, the *asportavit* was complete; but if he moved it only by lifting it up where it lay, and standing it on end, for the purpose of ripping it open, the *asportavit* was not complete, because every part of the package was not shown to have been moved. The central point of it might be exactly where it was before. This was understood by the poet who declared the *asportavit* to be complete as against him when "the Knave of Hearts, he stole some tarts, and—took them quite away."

There are one or two legal terms of which the meaning is perhaps not generally known. We need remind no one that lunacy is derived from an idea that madness is connected with the moon; but many may not be aware that felony is derived from an idea that felons are

prompted by excess of gall. Felonies were crimes committed *felleo animo*, with a mind affected by the gall; and Hale was of opinion that the reason why a lunatic cannot be guilty of a crime, is a want of gall. Then again, maiming is not any kind of wounding, but such wounding as lessens a man's power of battling in his own defence. Therefore, it was ruled that to knock out a man's front tooth is to maim him; but that he is not maimed by the knocking out of a grinder: because with a front tooth he can bite and tear an enemy, but with a grinder he can only masticate his food.

Lunatics and idiots, it was said, could not be criminals for want of gall; yet that they can destroy life is certain. Dr. Mayo relates that "an idiot in the hospital of Salzburg appearing to be singularly insusceptible of fear, an experiment of an appalling character, and of appalling consequences, was made upon him, as a means of putting his susceptibility to the test. It was proposed to produce in him the impression, that he saw a dead man come to life. A person, accordingly, had himself laid out as a corpse and enveloped in a shroud; and the idiot was ordered to watch over the dead body. The idiot perceiving some motion in the corpse, desired it to lie still; but the pretended corpse raising itself in spite of this admonition, the idiot seized a hatchet, which, unluckily, was within his reach, and cut off first one of the feet of the unfortunate counterfeit, and then, unmoved by his cries, cut off his head. He then calmly resumed his station by the real corpse." One sees in such a story what is meant by there being no gall—or felony in the lunatic. Here is a ghastly murder without bitterness of wrath or criminal intent. As little was there of gall in a French child, five years and a half old, mentioned by Voltaire. This little boy, at Lyons, swore against his own mother minute evidence of sundry horrible offences, ending with a murder, and the particulars of throwing the dead body in the Rhone, all of which turned out to be false. The child having been suborned by two children of her accusers, had very nearly sent his mother to the stake—for sugar-plums!

We have an arbitrary way of fixing fourteen years as the age in relation to responsibility for certain capital offences. We take that age from the East, where puberty comes early, and it is not the sole trace of an origin from Constantinople in many of our statutes. The Code Napoléon is wiser. It determines that if an accused person be under the age of—not fourteen, but—sixteen, it shall be inquired of by the jury whether he acted with, or without discernment. In the latter case he is acquitted; but is liable to be under due control. If, on the contrary, he be found to have acted with discernment, his punishment, it is decreed, shall be regulated in proportion to the full punishment of the offence, but never equal to it. Our old laws

took little thought at all of any such distinction. In sixteen hundred and twenty-nine, a child between the ages of but eight and nine was hanged for arson at the Abingdon assizes. As late as the year seventeen hundred and eighty a boy of fourteen was hanged for participating in a riot about Catholic Emancipation. It might be said, however, that a London street-boy is mature at ten. Account was given to a parliamentary committee of one of these unhappy creatures who during a career of five years had robbed to the amount of three thousand pounds. Besides numerous minor punishments, he had been sentenced to death; but, from compassion, sent to the Philanthropic Asylum instead of the gallows. Thence he escaped, and was for another offence transported for life—all, before the age of thirteen.

There were some niceties connected with the judicial treatment of the law of Escheat, or Confiscation, which led even to a necessity for bringing torture into common use. If prisoners liable to confiscation of their goods were mutes, that is to say refused to plead, there could be no attainer and consequently, no escheat. For this reason, in Sir Matthew Hale's time, it was the constant practice at Newgate to tie together with whipcord the two thumbs of any refractory person, and the whipcord with the aid of a person soon produced the desired effect. If more were required, recourse was had to the *peine forte et dure*, the more horrible form of torture. A case is on record of a member of an ancient family in Yorkshire, who, in a fit of jealousy, had killed three of his children, his youngest child being from home at nurse. Proceeding to destroy the infant also, he was terrified by a storm, which awakened his remorse. He was arrested; in order to preserve the estate to his surviving child, he died mute—under the agonies of torture!

A case of a different kind is that of one William Dalhousie, who, a hundred years ago, was convicted at the Salisbury quarter-sessions of petty larceny, for stealing one penny; whereby his effects consisting of bank notes to the amount of one hundred and eighty pounds and twenty guineas in money were forfeited to the bishop as lord of the manor. It so happened that the bishop had a conscience, and gave all the money back to the family, in this form, namely, one hundred pounds to the felon's father, the same to his daughter, and the remaining twenty shillings to himself. The old claims on confiscated goods were rarely however met in this way. Even kings were careful of the use they could make of such windfalls, and there was a great royal truth in the answer of James the First to the widow of Sir Walter Raleigh, who petitioned for the restitution of Sherborne Castle, that he "mun have it for Ker." Sylla the dictator is supposed to have been the inventor

of such forms of confiscation, which in the reign of Louis the Fourth was defended by M. de Turreil, a distinguished lawyer, by the express declaration, that "You must stab the heart of the father in the bosom of the son."

As we have fallen among kings we may as well go on to make a note or two upon the old judicial view of treason, concerning which it may be said first, that there has been some confusion in the interpretation of the old word *Imagine*, in the declaration that it is treason, among other things, to imagine the king's death. It used to mean simply to plot, and in this sense the Psalmist is translated, "Why do the people imagine a vain thing?" In this sense Chaucer speaks of such imagining as a thing visible to the eyes:

"There saw I all the dark imagining
Of felony, and all the compassing,
The spoiler with the knife," &c.

We will speak only of high treason, not of the petit treason, which is murderous rebellion of a wife against her lord and husband; of a servant against his master, and so on; though as a memorial of the domestic unavity for which it was thought worth while to take thought specifically by our forefathers, we may mention one of Sir Matthew Hale's statements; that if a wife throws a poker at her maid's head, which by accident lights on her husband's head and kills him, that is petit treason. This sort of offence was only abolished in the time of George the Fourth, and classed with ordinary murder. We speak only of high treason, and of the good old punishment of traitors, who were to be hanged, cut down alive, embowelled while still living, then finally be quartered. This sentence was only humanised in the time of George the Third by the exertions of Sir Samuel Romilly; which were, for a long time, baffled by the protest of the crown officers, that he was breaking down "the bulwarks of the constitution." May we be pardoned a few terrible lines to show the old judicial state of things, as concerned treason, in all its horror? In Sir Matthew Hale's time, the regicide Harrison, when the executioner was in the act of disembowelling him, rose and gave that functionary a blow in the face. Hugh Peters, after being carried on a sledge to the scaffold, was made to sit thereon within the rails, to behold the execution of Cook, who had been attorney of the Commonwealth, and we are told that when Cook was cut down alive, and brought to be quartered, Colonel Turner ordered the sheriff's men to bring Peters near, that he might see it; and by-and-by the hangman came to him all besmeared in blood, and rubbing his bloody hands together, he tauntingly asked; Come, how do you like this work, Mr. Peters? how do you like it? He replied, Friend, you do not well to trample on a dying man.

More mildly, Shenstone, in his ballad of

Jemmy Dawson, executed for the Scotch Rebellions, tells what reads like a true history of his sweetheart's following him to execution:

And severed was that beauteous neck,
Round which her arms had fondly closed;
And mangled was that faithful breast
On which her love-sick head reposed.
And ravished was that constant heart,
She did to every heart prefer;
For though it could its king forget,
'Twas true and loyal still to her.
Amid those unrelenting flames,
She bore his constant heart to see.

These couplets on treason are more harmless than a certain treasonable couplet made by a poor schoolmaster named Collynbore, who was in the reign of Richard the Second beheaded and quartered, as the chronicler Grafton tells, "for making a small ryme." His misfortune was that the exigency of his verse compelled him to put hog when he meant boar; he could not help it for the life of him, and paid his life as penalty. Thus ran the small ryme:

The Rat, the Cat, and Lovell our Dog
Rule all England under the Hog;

"meaning by the Hog," says Grafton, "the dreadful wild Bore which was the King's cognisance, and because the first line ended in dog, the metrician could not, observing the regiment of meeter, end the second verse in Bore, but called the Bore an Hogge."

When a traitor was condemned to be hung, drawn, and quartered, that sentence was commonly preceded by the order that he should be carried on a hurdle to the place of execution. This hurdle was a merciful invention of the monks. The original sentence had been that the object of a royal vengeance should be dragged at the tail of a horse over the stones and through the mud, and so brought, already bruised and bleeding, to his death. In this way Prince David was drawn through Shrewsbury, and Wallace through London. Monks seem to have suggested the humane interposition of a hurdle, for in the reign of Edward the Third a judge, in condemning a criminal, is reported to have given especial order that "neither friars nor others" should dare to help the culprit with anything to rest upon in the drawing to the gallows.

We add only one more note from Professor Amos's suggestive book, and that must be about the affixing of the heads of traitors upon Temple Bar. The heads of the persons convicted of the Scotch Rebellion in seventeen forty-five were affixed on Temple Bar, until the place was so full, that the remaining heads were sent to Carlisle for a like exhibition. In the newspaper called the *Post Boy*, is the following notice for May the eighteenth, seventeen hundred and twenty-three, respecting Laver's head: "his head was carried to Newgate in order to be parboiled, and affixed upon Temple Bar this day."

Surely it is no matter of regret for us that in the course of time there are so many changes, so many ruins, so many monuments of social or judicial wisdom—

“That as things wiped out with a sponge, do perish.”

Time, we are happy to know, still brandishes his sponge, and still there exist judicial curiosities doomed to, we hope prompt, effacement.

FALLEN AMONG THIEVES.

THE dearest friend I ever had, in all my experience of eighty years of life, was Harriet Delancy. We were companions in childhood. My parents were, indeed, the principal people of Rathkelspie, and inhabited a mansion in the market-place, then the most fashionable part of the town, while Harriet's father and mother rented a large broken-down, half-furnished house on the quay-side. We were rich, and they were poor; but this had no effect upon our intercourse, except that Harriet was oftener in our house than I in hers. Mrs. Delancy, a mere good-natured bustling manœuvring woman, did not attract me as my mother did her daughter. For you must know that my dear mother was looked upon in those days as the Earthly Providence of Rathkelspie. At all times and at all hours her house and heart were open. Every one who was in difficulty or distress came to ask counsel or assistance from her, and, indeed, her generosity was almost blameable. Among those persons who took undue advantage of it, my brother and I were accustomed to class Mrs. Delancy; much, however, as we were accustomed to that lady's obtrusive ways, and constantly as our house-door was open, it startled us very much one boisterous spring evening, when, at eleven o'clock, the door bell rang loudly, and we heard Mrs. Delancy's voice asking for Mrs. Hamilton.

She entered breathless from her struggles with the equinoctial gale, which was even now driving the hail furiously against the window; but it was not till my mother had forced her into the most comfortable chair near the fire, that she could answer the repeated question of “What can have happened to bring you out on such a night?”

“A wild night indeed!” she gasped; “but I could not rest till I had told dear Mrs. Hamilton all about it. There is nothing wrong, I assure you—Harriet is quite well, Miss Mary. Nothing is wrong; quite the reverse. That is, I hope so; but really, I am so nervous when I think of it, that I scarce know what I am saying or doing; and besides, I have come with such a strange petition to Miss Mary, that I am quite ashamed. Harriet would never forgive me if she knew; but Miss Mary is so fond of dear Harry that I thought I might venture. So, as soon as I got her sent off to bed, I just said to Mr. Delancy, ‘I'll slip on my cloak and hood, and see what dear Mrs.

Hamilton thinks;’ and he said, ‘Best wait till morning, Sally;’ but I wouldn't; for I thought sufficient for the morning would be the labour thereof, especially if the Vixen sail by the evening's tide, as Captain Culver says she must.”

“The Vixen! Captain Culver! What are you talking of, Mrs. Delancy?”

And in the lady's own good time we learnt that one of the sailors of the revenue cutter Vixen, just in port, after an unsuccessful chase of a smuggling craft off the coast of Ireland, had brought up to Mr. Delancy's house a crumpled scrawl containing strange intelligence. It was to the purport that a cousin of his, a certain Lady Stewart, who had married a rich Irish landholder in one of the north-eastern counties, and become a widow, was shut up in an old castle by her servants; and, if not relieved within a certain time, the writer hinted that he could not answer for the consequences. Mr. Delancy, his wife said, was greatly moved to find that his cousin—an old sweetheart—whom for many years he had supposed to be so lapped in luxury as to have forgotten her less fortunate relations, should be in such a perilous case. “And so,” she went on to say, “nothing will satisfy him but that he must start at once to help his cousin Bess out of her scrape. And, as for Harriet, she says she will go with him; to which, says Captain Culver, why not? The Vixen, he says, is bound for Strangford Bay, will start to-morrow night, and nothing, he declares, would please him better than to land us all safely at Caerinnys, which it seems is somewhere thereabouts. Now, you know, ma'am, if we could rescue the old lady, Harriet might be the better of it some day; that is, supposing that the wretches have not robbed her of her money: for of course she could not do less than help those who helped her;—us, for instance. So I have not set my face against the plan; for though I hate the sea, and am terrified out of my life at the idea of coming near those savage Irish, still, you know, ma'am, as Captain Culver is a bachelor, and all that sort of thing, I am not satisfied that I could let Harriet go, unless I went as well. So I suppose I must not mind myself. But, by-the-by, what in the world shall I do for a decent cloak and gown for Harriet?”

The object of the visit thus came out at last, and it was speedily attained. I said hastily, that, on that point, there could be no difficulty, as Harriet and I were much of a size; and, hurrying our visitor away to my own room, forced on her acceptance all that I knew or guessed would render my friend's outfit complete. Among other things so given, there is reason why I should specify a neat little green mantle which I had just purchased.

Early next morning Harriet was with me, thanking and reproaching me for all that I had done, yet tearfully confessing that I had

relieved her of great trouble, by enabling her to appear at Caerinnys as became her father's daughter. "You have too often accused me of being too proud in these matters," she said; "and I am humble now, through pride; because I should not like to have it said or thought that we went to Lady Stewart's help from mercenary motives." The blush upon her cheek, as she said this, showed that her mother's speculations on this head had wounded her high spirit to the quick.

At nine o'clock in the evening, the moon nearly at full, we were bidding farewell to our friends by the quay side. My brother, laughingly, suggested terrors to our Harriet, who fully expecting Lady Stewart's rebels to submit at the first summons, was not to be daunted. "If harm should threaten us," she added, with much feeling, "we shall have an able knight and many doughty squires ready with aid." As she spoke, the clear cold moonlight fell upon her face, and it seemed to me that she never looked more beautiful. Nor to me alone, I suspect did she seem beautiful; for Captain Culver had approached us quietly, and there was that in his look and voice as he thanked her for her good opinion of himself and his crew, which set me speculating, as all girls of seventeen will do, upon the future. Till that moment I had been anxious about the success of this cruise in the *Vixen*; but now I felt satisfied that Harriet was in good hands, and that if love was an efficient helper, she was safe from harm.

William and I lingered on the quay long after our friends left us, watching the clever little *Vixen* as she crossed the bar, between Inchcarne and the coast, and vanished in the darkness.

Time passed on; and I began to think it unusual for the *Vixen* to be so long absent from Rathkelspie; but it was not till a month had elapsed that any of us confessed ourselves to be really anxious on our friends' behalf. Then, even my father seemed to think matters serious, and even spoke either of sending across to Portpatrick to inquire whether there were no tidings of the cutter, or of writing to some person in authority to ascertain whether the *Vixen* had received fresh orders. Before any fresh step was taken, came an order from the revenue station at Kilkrummoch, desiring that a certain number of carts should be in readiness at the quay-side of Rathkelspie, to remove some heavy packages out of the *Vixen* cutter, then hourly expected. The revenue-officer who brought the order set the whole town in commotion by strange rumours which he brought with him. Kilkrummoch fishing-boats, which had been blown by the late storm across the narrow channel between Scotland and Ireland, had been told at Donaghadee that the *Vixen* was storm-stayed in Strangford Lough, being unable to cross the bar during the late south-east gale; but that she had made some wonderful captures

during her long cruise. Some whispered that not only had she taken the smuggler of which she had been so long in chase, but that she had also captured a French privateer, laden with Spanish gold; which, together with a great number of prisoners of rank—among whom were three ladies—she was bringing in triumph to Rathkelspie; others denied the privateer; but said, that in her chase of the smuggler she had come upon a haunt of buccaneers, commanded by a female captain, who had bravely defended their little island, but had finally surrendered after both their Amazon leader and brave Captain Culver had been wounded. It was for their treasures, said the people, that so many carts were wanted; and it was to carry the wounded lady-captain to the hospital that Mr. M'Donald had been ordered to bring down his sedan-chair to the quay-side.

Towards evening of the day after Captain Culver's orders reached Rathkelspie, a change in the wind caused the knowing ones to prophesy the prompt arrival of the cutter. The array of carts drew up at the quay-side, the sedan was set at ease behind the look-out house; the crowd, attracted by the strange reports that had been current, were gathered in masses on the pier; and, as the glowing light of sunset fell upon their eager and expectant faces, the whole scene was picturesque enough, to me a most exciting one, as soon as word was given that the *Vixen* was spied rounding Inchcarne point.

The little ship swam into the bay stately as a swan. In an instant she was surrounded by a crowd of boats; every boatman offering assistance, and asking innumerable questions. When the first party came ashore out of the cutter, the high-wrought expectations of the spectators was shown in the deathlike stillness that succeeded the late hum of voices. Their whole souls seemed concentrated in their eyes. They never thought now of making inquiries; they were only too content to look. Judge, then, of their disappointment, when the first person who landed was Mrs. Delaney. But, at the same time, attention was attracted to the movements of Captain Culver and Mr. Delaney, who were carrying, rather than assisting, a tall veiled figure from the boat. "It's true, it's true. See, the captain's arm is in a sling; and the lady must be sore wounded to let herself be carried in that fashion. What for have they rolled her up in veils and mantles? I would like rarely to see a she-captain, but I cannot get a glimpse of her face. Nay! if that's not Miss Harriet coming out of the boat, with two bonny little dogs in her arms. She-captains are fine folk, to have such fine attendance! Just see how tender-like they are carrying her. Softly, Captain, softly! The sedan is ready, and M'Donald has had two or three extra drams; so he'll be as steady as a rock."

The laugh that followed did not prevent

the crowd from making way with instinctive courtesy for the passage of the lady ; and, when Harriet approached, many a rough cap was raised to greet her, and many a rough voice murmured, "If Miss Harry was the she-captain, there are many that would fain be o' her followin'."

What story had Harriet to tell ? She used to say that that voyage to Ireland was the one period of her life to which she looked back with unmixed delight. The moonlight walks on the deck of the Vixen ; the feelings then aroused ; the words then spoken, that were to be remembered for life ; even the very anticipations of danger, gave a vague pleasure worth a thousand pyramids of solid gain. They found themselves too soon in Strangford Lough. But even when she parted from the Vixen, and saw the square tower of Caerinnys frowning above her from its seagirt isle, she was still full of hope for herself and others.

It had been agreed that the Delancys should land from the cutter before reaching Caerinnys, and should make their appearance there, not backed by an armed force, but simply as Lady Stewart's nearest relatives ; arrived to pay a visit to her in her Irish home. Their reception was to point out to them their future course ; but they arranged with Captain Culver that if they did not return within twenty-four hours, he was to understand that they intended staying at Caerinnys for the present, and that he might depart in search of the smuggler without feeling any anxiety on their account. His return to the neighbourhood was to be announced to them by a signal on a point of land visible from Lady Stewart's windows. These preliminaries settled, they pursued their journey.

When they reached Caerinnys, it appeared desolate enough in the grey twilight. The whole house consisted of one large square tower, built upon the edge of a small island accessible by land when the tide was at the lowest. The terraces and flower-gardens which had once softened the harsh features of the place, had all fallen to ruin, through neglect. A few felled trees, of noble size, lay prostrate upon the rank and weedy lawn.

After waiting long at the gate, the Delancys were admitted into the castle, and received with constrained, but cringing civility, by Jeffrey, the steward, who himself led them to his lady's chamber. This was an apartment of enormous size, with narrow windows, flowing tapestry, and a look of discomfort in all its arrangements ; yet with some articles of luxury scattered about. Here, in a high-backed chair of gilded leather, and with her little dogs at her feet, sat Lady Stewart, beautiful still, although no longer young. Even when I knew her, I used to marvel how a woman of her years and sorrows could retain so soft a skin ; so youthful an appearance. To the

last, she wore the same delicate rouge on her cheek, and a light touch of powder in her hair. She never dressed in anything except the richest and most delicate-tinted silks or satins, and never appeared without the black velvet collar round her slender throat, clasped with its diamond solitaire ; valuable bracelets on her arms, which to the last were beautifully rounded ; rich gems on her taper fingers. Such was her attire when the Delancys were first introduced into her presence at Caerinnys ; and she was so unlike in everything to the place in which they found her, that she looked more like a princess bound there by a fairy spell, than a real every-day woman.

This lady's reception of her cousins was all that they could desire ; and for a few days things went well. The Delancys soon found out that Lady Stewart's life was in no danger ; for a large income, which her servants had applied to their own use, depended on it. But she was their prisoner. She could not stir from her apartment without leave,—a leave which she no longer sought. She could not even speak as she felt ; and, when she ventured to hint at her desire to escape out of thralldom, her eyes would wander round the room with a vague glance of terror. Something she dreaded ; although what that was, she never dared to tell.

The lady of the castle soon became attached to Harriet ; and, when Mr. Delancy suggested that she should return with them to see Rathkelspie, the poor prisoner caught at the hint with eagerness, but begged him to contrive the ways and means of doing so without speaking to her about it. Mr. Delancy, thus encouraged, laid his plans, taking only Harriet into his counsels. In the present day they would have had little difficulty in deciding how to act. Nothing would have been easier than to call in the aid of law. But, sixty years ago, things were quite different, and the state of the country was such that it was much safer to plan an escape without trying the power of the law against the lawless. It was considered best to leave behind the massive plate possessed by Lady Stewart, and to be content with the more valuable articles of jewellery which could be carried, in a small compass. To gather these jewels together, and to prepare the baggage for a sudden flight, was Harriet's especial duty ; not an easy one, because her huge chamber, like all others at Caerinnys, opened into all sorts of winding staircases and hidden passages, and was liable at all moments to be entered by one or other of the servants. These good people, under the pretext of strict attention to the guests, were keeping up a constant watch upon their movements. Harriet's room had, however, one advantage over all the others in the house ; it was supposed to be haunted, and no one but Jeffrey dared to

enter it alone after nightfall—even he not being quite comfortable over his own boldness. Therefore Harriet was left a good deal to her own devices, and availed herself so well of her opportunities as to discover in her own room a good hiding-place for whatever she wished to conceal. It was at the head of her bed, behind the wainscot; cobwebs that tapestried the door proved the place to be either unknown or forgotten, and upon that hint she chose it for her use.

All was at last ready, and nothing waited for but the return of the Vixen. Day after day, however, passed, and still there was no signal on the wooded hill, while the increasing civility of the servants, their determination to escort the strangers on their walks, their eagerness to be always at hand—forestalling every want and wish—made it evident that their suspicions were aroused, and that a prompt departure was desirable.

The visitors had stayed a fortnight at Caerinnys, when Harriet was roused from sleep one night by the sound of voices almost at her ear. She had once before fancied something of the kind, but had persuaded herself that it was only fancy, or the sighing of the wind. To-night there could be no mistake; so she rose softly out of bed, flung round her the mantle I had given her, which happened to be lying near, and groped her way to the point from which the sounds seemed to proceed. They led her to the recess behind her bed. She opened the door gently; a ray of light falling on the floor from a chink in the wainscot with which it was lined, pointed out whence the sounds came, and, advancing carefully, she listened with the most eager attention. At first, she could not make out what they said, for there were several speakers, and their language and tones were difficult to follow; but at length Jeffrey's familiar voice was heard, and from what he said, she discovered that they were completing a plot for the murder of herself, her father, and mother, and the regaining, in this way, of their lost control over Lady Stewart and her fortune. The day after the next was the time decided upon for the execution of their project; and, with a minuteness of detail that made her blood run cold, everything was arranged for the perpetration of the crime and its complete concealment.

Bold as she was, Harriet was yet only a girl of seventeen; and, as the conviction forced itself upon her that they were almost powerless to avert their impending fate, her senses failed for an instant—faint and weak, she was compelled to lean for support against the wall. To her great horror, it yielded to her touch; a door, similar to that which communicated with her own room, suddenly sprang open, and she found herself, without warning, in the midst of the conspirators. For one dreadful moment she gave herself up for lost, but the sudden shock of danger had restored

her self-control. It was otherwise with those on whom she had intruded. They leapt from their seats with terror; superstitious awe was manifest in their blanched faces, and, with a murmured exclamation of "Greenmantle! Greenmantle!" they rushed from the room in wild disorder, throwing down the table, and extinguishing the light in their confusion.

Harriet perceived at once that she was, for the present, safe. They had mistaken her for the ghost supposed to haunt that part of the house—It was even possible that their foul project might be put to flight by the supposed intervention of the spirit. In case of one possible accident, however, she returned swiftly to her chamber; and, taking especial care to fasten both the doors of the recess, and to conceal her mantle, she returned to her couch. It was well that she lost no time in doing this; for, a very few minutes afterwards, one of the many doors of her chamber was stealthily unclosed, and Jeffrey crept in, with a candle in one hand and a knife in the other. Through her half-closed eyelids she could see him looking curiously round the room, then coming to the bed. She had presence of mind sufficient to keep still, although she fancied that the knife was at her throat, and drew her breath regularly; even when the unfaithful steward passed the candle once or twice close to her eyes. Presently muttering, "It must have been Greenmantle after all!" the traitor glided gently from the room.

Harriet slept no more that night. Immediate escape was the sole chance of life; but how to leave Caerinnys without help from the Vixen she could not imagine. Long before it was light she was at her window, straining her eyes in the direction of the promised signal; although previous disappointment left her little hope of seeing it. The faint blue of dawn gradually stole over the face of the earth; it changed to a warmer hue, and then the sun, slowly rising from the eastern horizon, gilded the tips of the distant hills, touched the edge of the waters, and rising higher and higher in the heavens, shone full on the shore, the woods, the signal-hill—the signal itself!

An exclamation of intense gratitude broke from her lips. Near escape was possible, but still there were great difficulties to be overcome. Jeffrey's nocturnal visit showed that his suspicions were aroused; and, though lulled for the present, would revive upon the slightest grounds. Experience had also taught Harriet that it was almost impossible to escape observation when he was on the alert. The girl felt that her only chance was to go instantly to Captain Culver. After last night's orgies, probably, the servants would sleep heavily during the early morning; but, in an hour or two later they would be again dogging her steps. Could she not go herself to the bay? The tide was already low, and

was still falling; she could cross with little difficulty. Maidenly hesitations intervened, but it was necessary to suppress them; and wrapping a large cloak round her, and tying a handkerchief over her head in the then fashion of the country, she set off on her perilous journey.

She escaped from the house without detection, stole down the alley of evergreens which led to the shore, and then, with the delay of a moment passed in fervent prayer, ventured across the channel. The water, at first almost knee-deep, became shallower as she proceeded; and, in a few minutes, she found herself on dry ground, with a bright May sun to cheer the way. Ignorant of the country, Harriet felt most secure in following the line of coast; at sight of every indentation, every fresh bay, she hoped that at last the signal-hill would lie before her.

Long before she reached the hill she met the captain; who, with the zeal of a true lover, was bound already in the direction of his lady's dwelling. Explanations and consultations followed; but I am content to add, they laid their plans so well, that the escape from Caerinnys was effected on that very night. Jeffrey and his crew were taken by surprise and overpowered, almost before they knew what had befallen them.

The garrison being thus mastered, it was of course a matter of no difficulty to carry off the whole of Lady Stewart's plate and other articles of value, as well as the jewels Harriet had laid in store. The quantity of plate was something fabulous, and the only way of accounting for it having been permitted to remain so long at the castle was, that Jeffrey and his companions were so confident of their position, that they had no thought of being interfered with in their unlawful proceedings. In the old house on the Quayside, after Lady Stewart came to live with the Delancy's, the plate, jewels, and lace were a sight well worth a day's journey to see. Magnificent candelabra of solid silver, dishes of the precious metal were in daily use, and the most beautiful gold and silver vases were scattered in profusion over rooms and passages. As to the jewels, as I told you, Lady Stewart always wore them on neck, arms and fingers; but Mrs. Delancy also amused the whole township of Rathkelsie, by appearing at church on the Sunday after her return from Ireland, with long diamond pendants hanging from her ears, and visible below her bonnet. She wore also several valuable finger-rings outside her gloves.

Captain Culver's gallantry at the siege of Caerinnys—where, by the way, he was slightly wounded by Jeffrey's pistol—joined to his previous character, excited a strong interest in high quarters, and gained him promotion. He distinguished himself in many a bold exploit during the next few years of the war, and died like a hero on

the deck of his own ship, with the shout of victory around him. I was by, and saw how Harriet listened with a sparkling eye and glowing cheek to the great story of his death. I was by, two years afterwards, and saw Mr. Delancy weep while he tried to comfort cousin Stewart at his daughter's funeral.

RAGGED ROBIN.

THERE is a large, light, lofty workshop, situated in one of the best thoroughfares of the town, in which are occupied about two dozen girls between the ages of eight and seventeen. They make choice furniture for dolls' houses. They work in groups, each group having its own department of the little trade; some cut the wire which forms the framework of the furniture, some cover the wire with muslin, or adorn the furniture with imitations of wood carving, others cover sofas and chairs with gay chintzes, satins, and velvets, or fit up miniature bedsteads with bed furniture. The articles so made all look luxurious and beautiful, and have also the merit of not being fragile. A young lady whose age is not so great as that of the majority of the workers—only whose education has been infinitely better—rules over the little band; apportions the work; distributes the material; keeps the accounts; stops the disputes; stimulates the intellect, and directs the recreation of all. The Autocrat of all the Russias has not a sway more despotic than Miss O. P. Q.; but the two potentates differ in this, that the one governs by fear, the other by affection.

The objects of this little institution are, to employ and educate girls born of the poorest parents, and to accumulate for them the profits of their labour, so that they may be of use to them in after life.

It is not undesirable that the wives of the rising generation, and the mothers of the next, should be intelligent, industrious, and moral; or that they should be possessors of some little store of money, which might be used to start them in the world, or drawn upon, as need came, in the course of wedded life. Such are the objects of the promoters of this industrial school for the manufacture of Art Toys. It is clear that they are not to be achieved at once; but it is pleasant to know that these Art Toys find a ready sale, and that their elegance and durability are likely to preserve for them the public favour. They are the invention of a lady, and may be remembered by some as furnishing the Tudor Villa, a model contributed by her to the Great Exhibition of eighteen hundred and fifty-one.

The discipline of the little factory about which I am speaking I will now endeavour briefly to describe. There is head-work as well as hand-work. One morning, when the girls had just been singing in chorus, as they sat at labour, a song about buttercups and

daisies, a confused little fumbling tap was heard at the workshop door, and several of the workers, when they recognised the little creature who was knocking, joyfully pulled her in. They had not seen her for many months—not since they had all been together in the Ragged School. Her school-fellows had sought for this poor little creature, who had won their love and sympathy, to tell her of their new kind of work; but her parents had left their old house, and gone none of the neighbours knew whither.

Well, there she was. And the great girls took her in their arms and passed her from one to another, and the little ones took it in turns to hold her hand. "How are you?" "Where have you been all this time?" "Where do you live?" "How did you come?" The child, in a ragged gown that had belonged to a much larger sister, answered only the last of these questions. She partially drew up her long dress, and held out her feet, buried in enormous boots. "I would have come long ago," she said, with perfect good humour, "but I had no shoes and no stockings. I wanted so much to come to-day, I could not stay away any longer. Mrs. Sims told me you were at work here, so I put on Billy's boots. My feet are so sore," she added, wincing with the pain.

Miss O. P. Q. went to her and had the boots removed, the poor little stockingless feet bathed; for they were swollen and bleeding. News of the child's effort being in the meantime carried by his wife to the foreman of the men's workshop, in another part of the building; he, who was a good-natured man, made a collection amongst the workpeople; and, going out himself for the purpose, bought a pair of stockings, and a pair of strong well-fitting shoes. Within an hour the little girl was comfortably shod: proud indeed, and happy. Moreover, there were rumours that the foreman's wife intended giving her two pinafores; for her great frock hung in dirty strips about her limbs.

My visit to the room was paid soon after the arrival of the little outcast. While she rested from her long walk, sitting by Miss O. P. Q., some girls came up to the table, and inquired what they should do. "Your Balaklava work." Now, this work did not seem to be popular. The name was applied to a great pile of confusion in the corner of the room, strongly contrasting with the order everywhere else visible. It was a heap of wire-frames which had been made in the spring, before the girls could work so well as they now do. These frames had been paid for; but, being found unfit for use, Miss O. P. Q. had decreed that each girl should spend a part of every day in correcting this bad work, without receiving further payment. The girls murmured. "Edith," the teacher then said to her own younger sister, "then I must give it to you to do." The golden-haired

child lifted up her eyes, and then answered promptly, "Which shall I begin upon, the large arm-chairs or the sofas?" Her obedience had a prompt effect. "No, if you please," several cried out at once, "don't give Balaklava work to Miss Edith. She has no right to do it. None of that bad work is hers. We'll do it." And as gay as larks, they skipped across the room, took up the work, and set about it.

The new comer—who got the name of Ragged Robin—was of course put to the easiest employment; covering the wire with muslin. Her fingers were awkward, and she was bewildered with the scene around her; she did not get on at all well. Miss O. P. Q. encouraged her, and said that every one must have her time to learn; appealing to the girls, who testified that, at first, they had not earned sixpence a-week, and now they could earn six, eight, or ten shillings.

Some incident having produced, soon afterwards, a conversation about spiders, Miss O. P. Q. went for a book, and read to the girls, while they worked, an amusing account of spiders and of their ways.

As dinner-time drew near, our new upholsteress becoming hungry, produced from her pocket a penny saveloy, which she had bought upon the road. She was recommended, however, not to eat it, and invited to dine with the other girls; two of whom were then laying the dinner-cloth on one of the workroom tables, whilst another was to be heard cooking in an adjoining room. The girls, I found, paid a shilling from their wages every Saturday, for the week's dinner; and, by all dining together, they secured a wholesome and sufficient meal even for the daily twopence. This was an arrangement of Miss O. P. Q.'s; who had remarked with sorrow the unwholesome food brought by the children, and that even sometimes they brought with them none at all; either because their mothers had nothing to give them, or were in an ill humour, and might not be asked for it.

The young cook brought in the produce of her skill—a dish of stewed meat, and a more ample dish of hot potatoes. The girls sang a grace, and the new comer's eyes, at that and at the steam of meat together, filled with tears. The pure air she breathed, the light, comfort, and cleanliness, the social meal, the cheerful faces, were all so different from what she knew at home.

After dinner, the children ran down to their gardens, attended their flowers—for they had gardens; and, in three-quarters of an hour after the time when dinner had begun, they were all happily seated again at their work.

At four o'clock, a bright-looking young lady, who had not appeared before, summoned the girls to their lessons. They addressed her as Miss Anna, and at once two of the girls sprang away to prepare the

schoolroom, which was in another corner of the premises. First, there was a writing lesson. Then came lessons in geography and history. Ragged Robin had never learnt geography before; but guessed it must be something very interesting when she heard one of the girls say that she lay awake at night to tell her eldest sister, who was at service during the day, Miss Anna's story about Norway. At the history lesson, two girls argued the point whether the horses of the Britons were kind to stand still in the scythe-wheeled chariots, till their masters were out of danger; or cruel, to drag the chariots among the enemy (of course, the horses were free agents, and conscious of what they did). The humble cottage in Britain of Caractacus touched them more than anything; but led to the inquiry how a king came to dwell in a cottage? All sympathies went with the Britons; and, when the narrative came to the point where the Romans have to call forces from Britain to defend their threatened country, the triumph of the children was unbounded; and such exclamations as, "Ah! it was their turn then!" resounded on all sides.

During the last summer Miss O. P. Q. received an invitation from a friend of hers to take the little upholsterers for a day's pleasure at a country-house. Twenty-five went in a van. Unfortunately they had a wet day; but all enjoyed the drive, and kept up their spirits by loud choruses. Many of the girls had scarcely ever—some had never—seen the country. The little gardens at Milend called forth shouts of delight; how much more the rose-covered cottages and corn-fields, as they travelled on? Not one of them had ever seen corn-fields at harvest time. Ragged Robin was quite fascinated by a garden full of large green cabbages, on which the rain-drops hung, with scarlet-runners shooting up between. They passed a windmill—its construction was explained to them, and their delight was great, for they had sung a song about a windmill, which they said they never before understood. It is hard to realise the dreariness of ignorance like this in our town alleys; and yet, to how many does it spare the pain of an intolerable contrast! So far all had been laughing and talking; but, on entering a fine elm-tree avenue leading to the house they visited, they were subdued and became silent. They were gladly welcomed, and despatched presently with umbrellas and over-shoes to explore the grounds, where they were especially astonished at the large conservatories, those circular walls of splendid plants. One child timidly asked, whether she might pick up some dead rose-leaves to carry home? They visited the rabbits, poultry, pheasants, dogs, and horses. Dinner was laid in a long room apart from the house. Vases of bright flowers stood on the table; and, in the centre, stood a vase of corn, and of fern and other leaves; picture-books for the children

to look at lay on tables about the room. During dinner one of the young ladies played on the piano. One child lowered knife and fork gradually till they rested on the plate; her eyes, full of wonder, lightened into admiration, then into delight, and last a smile passed over the careworn little face. By-and-by entered a large dog, wet with rain, exciting great commotion. He drew some of the party to the lawn to play with him, whilst others closed round the piano. Some went to the top of the house to see the view, others went to the boat on the lake. A sudden thunder-storm diversified the entertainment.

In the course of the afternoon a son of the house desired to take a photograph of the party. They were arranged,—some standing, some sitting, some with flowers. The difficulty was that, if one held a flower, all the others wished to hold one also, which the young artist declared to be against the rules of composition. The children wished Miss O. P. Q. to come into the group; and then each wanted to be taken sitting by her side. When all was settled, great misfortune got among the chemicals, and the photograph did not succeed.

At tea-time each girl found a bunch of flowers by her plate, gathered for her by the children of the family. In returning home—each with flowers—the upholsterers were more wild with delight than they had been in going, each talking of what she had liked best. Little Robin quietly said:

"I shall never throw away my flowers."

"But they will die."

"Yes," she replied. "But I shall never throw them away."

Poor baby, they soon became her only treasure. After she had been some time at the school, Miss O. P. Q. found it necessary to send word to her mother that she wished she would keep her daughter clean, as cleanliness was indispensable. For several days after that the child did not come, and at last the mother sent word that she "would not let her go back to work, because of Miss O. P. Q.'s message; but she was much obliged for the shoes and frock."

Weeks afterwards, poor Ragged Robin came one afternoon with a baby in her arms, and two little ones dragging at her ragged frock. They had trooped all the way from Clerkenwell "just only to see Miss O. P. Q." Ragged Robin was a very little child, whose growth had been stunted by nursing children nearly as big as herself. She tottered under her burden and almost fell as she climbed the work-room stairs. Miss O. P. Q. was not at home, and, after waiting as long as she could, in hope that she would come, Robin toiled painfully back with her three brothers. Next day the gentle teacher went herself to Robin's house. It looked too dirty to enter; but one of the girls who acted as guide mounted the stairs, and

on a dark landing Robin was found washing heavy sheets, with which she stood upon a three-legged stool to struggle. She came down-stairs, and wept at the kind words brought home to her. She was seen no more. She is with many thousands pining and perishing in London courts.

When I last saw those little toy-makers whom Robin was not privileged to join, they were looking brilliant in the light of a tall Christmas-tree.

The numbers employed in this industrial school have, for a season, been diminished by the closing of an institution for adults, to which it was appended. I do not think, however, that the children's training-school will die ; it is more likely that it will flourish, and be an example and encouragement to those who think it worth while to found more of the same sort.

ALICE.

BRIGHT star amid the cloud-forms of the past,

Alice, my backward gaze is fixed on thee ;

There is the look you turned upon me last,

And in your face the same serenity,

The same high faith upon your noble brow :

O, fade not, gentle vision from above ;

For, in my thought, you are more *beauteous* now

Than when you lured me on and made me love.

Beside the river once I walk'd with you ;

It may be, you forget so small a thing ;

In evening's tints faded the heavens blue,

The dark trees humming, the wind murmuring,

The babbling tide : these tuneful sounds I heard,

Set to your voice, that o'er my senses stole :

Perchance, you did not know that every word

Was like a silver link to chain my soul.

Then came the hopes and fears of hidden love ;

Where'er you went, it was a blessed place,

Haunted, I dreamed, with angels from above ;

My sweetest joy was to behold your face.

I longed to do you some great good—then die :

That which you touched was sacred ; still, I hold—

Poor relic of the precious days gone by—

A few words writ by you, more dear than gold.

I deem you little less than angel-born,

Although you led me on to love in vain ;

For, where you could not love, you did not scorn ;

You were too kind to give me needless pain.

I was your veriest slave if you but smiled,

And still I madly hoped your love to win ;

And wept to know, "She thinks me but a child,

And dreams not of the fire that burns within."

I saw you stand, with him to whom you gave

Your plighted troth, upon the ocean shore ;

And, as your glances mingled in the wave,

I felt that you were one for evermore ;

And, like a coward soul, I could not speak ;—

I conquer now, rejoicing in your fate :

His noble heart is strong as mine was weak ;

I was not worthy of a love so great.

Life's dream is over ; I have borne the smart,

And live to bless you for alluring me :

If there is aught of greatness in my heart,

It sprang at first from futile love of thee.

For, when I found my airy hope was gone,

There came a night of dark and bitter strife ;

And, with the light of morning's gradual dawn,

My soul expanded into nobler life.

STRYCHNINE.

In Ceylon and several districts of India grows a moderate-sized tree, with thick shining leaves, and a short crooked stem. In the fruit season it is readily recognised by its rich orange-coloured berries about as large as golden pippins ; the rind is hard and smooth, and covers a white soft pulp, the favourite food of many kinds of birds, within which are the flat round seeds, not an inch in diameter, ash-grey in colour, and covered with very minute silky hairs. The Germans fancy they can discover a resemblance in them to grey eyes, and call them crows'-eyes, but the likeness is purely imaginary. The tree is the *Strychnos nux-vomica*, and the seed is the deadly poison nut. The latter was early used as a medicine by the Hindoos, and its nature and properties understood by Oriental doctors, long before it was known to foreign nations. Dog-killer and Fish-scale, are two of its Arabic names. It is stated that at present the natives of Hindostan often take it for many months continuously, in much the same way as an opium-eater eats opium. They commence with taking the eighth of a nut a-day and gradually increase their allowance to an entire nut, which would be about twenty grains. If they eat it directly before or after food, no unpleasant effects are produced ; but, if they neglect this precaution, spasms result.

The bark of the tree, as well as the seeds, is poisonous ; and its resemblance to *Angostura* or *Cusparia* bark, a tonic medicine imported from South America, led to the most unfortunate results at the beginning of this century on the Continent. In eighteen hundred and four, Dr. Rambach, a physician at Hamburg, noticed that a certain species of *Angostura* bark acted as a powerful poison ; an order was consequently issued forbidding the use of the drug. In spite, however, of this injunction, it managed to find its way into Germany, and did so much harm, and created such alarm, that, in eighteen hundred and fifteen, the governments of Bavaria, Austria, Baden, and Wurtemberg ordered all the *Angostura* bark in the possession of the chemists to be seized, and physicians at the same time were desired not to prescribe it. An investigation was instituted, and it turned out, that a quantity of a bark had been imported from the East into England, that not being saleable, it was sent to Holland, and as there appeared no greater likelihood of selling it there, it was mixed with, and passed off as *Angostura* bark. For many years botanists were at fault as to the tree which yielded this false *Angostura* bark, but in eighteen hundred and thirty-seven,

Dr. O'Shaughnessy, in Calcutta, clearly established its identity with that of the *nux vomica* tree.

True *Angostura* bark has a finer texture than the other, is darker-coloured, aromatic, pungent, and less bitter. The bark of the *nux vomica* tree has very much the twisted appearance of pieces of dried horn.

Powdered *nux vomica*, which is one of the forms in which the drug is preserved, has an extremely bitter taste, and smells like liquorice. As a medicine it acts, in very small doses, as a tonic, and in rather larger quantities it is given as a stimulant to the nervous system.

Its very peculiar and extraordinarily energetic effects, when taken in a poisonous quantity, have excited the interest of physiologists, and hecatombs of cats, and dogs, and mice, and guinea-pigs have been sacrificed in their researches. In eighteen hundred and nine, Majendie and Delille read a paper before the French Institution on the result of their experiments on animals. Ten grains taken internally killed a dog in forty-five minutes, and a grain and a-half thrust into a wound, killed another in seven minutes. The symptoms were, in every case, of the usual character. The animal, a few minutes after the introduction of the poison, becomes agitated, and tumbles; in a short time it is seized with stiffness and starting of the limbs, which increase until a violent general spasm ensues, in which the head is bent back, the limbs are extended and rigid, the spine stiffened, and respiration checked by the fixing of the chest. An interval of ease follows, and then another paroxysm comes on, and another and another, till the animal perishes, suffocated or exhausted. Tetanus or locked jaw is the only disease that produces similar effects, but never proves so rapidly fatal.

The action of the poison appears to be almost entirely confined to the spinal cord and the nerves of which it is the centre. Stannius found that the removal of the brain in frogs, did not interfere with the effects of the poison; and Eumert's experiments lead to the same conclusion; he found that if the spinal cord be destroyed after the symptoms have come on, the convulsions cease instantaneously, although the circulation continues for some minutes. In man, however, there is occasionally stupor, while in other instances the sensibility is heightened, and the faculties are unnaturally acute.

A difference of opinion has existed as to the post-mortem effects of the poison. This is most satisfactorily explained by M. Brown-Séguard in the course of his recent most interesting experiments. He has noticed that if a dog be killed after one convulsion, when there has been no prolonged muscular exertion, eight days will elapse before putrefaction is established; if, on the other hand, the animal endure thirty or forty convul-

sions, there is a quick approach, and short duration of the rigidity of death, and putrefaction commences in eight hours—exactly a similar state of things has been noticed in beasts that have been overdriven, and in cocks that have died from fighting.

Plants, as well as animals, are affected by this poison. Professor Marut states, that a quarter of an hour after immersing the root of a French bean in a solution of five grains of the extract of *nux vomica* in an ounce of water, the petals became curved downwards, and in twelve hours the plant died. Fifteen grains of the same extract were inserted in the stem of a lilac-tree, and the wound closed; in thirteen days the neighbouring leaves began to wither.

After all the attention that has been bestowed upon *nux vomica*, the skill of man has been unable to detect any certain antidote. Its effects during life are too characteristic ever to be mistaken; and after death, unlike most vegetable poisons, it is almost invariably to be found in the stomach of those poisoned with it. But to the wretched sufferer science brings no relief. The medical man has little else to trust to than emetics and the stomach-pump; artificial respiration ought also to be resorted to, and infusion of galls and green tea, on account of the tannin they contain, are mentioned as worthy of trial.

In eighteen hundred and eighteen, Pelletier and Caventou extracted from *nux vomica* the peculiar ingredient strychnine; it is to this that the seed owes its poisonous properties: it belongs to a class of substances which, owing to their action on vegetable colours, and their forming salts with acids, have been named vegetable alkalis or alkaloids, and of which the most familiar are morphia, obtained from opium, and quinine from *Cinchona* bark.

Strychnine is likewise a constituent of *St. Ignatius'* beans, the seeds of a tree indigenous to the Philippine Islands; of one of the snake-woods of Asia, so called from the natives imagining that they possess the power of preserving them from the bites of serpents; and of the *Upas Tienté* or *Tietek*, a large climbing shrub in Java. Dr. Darwin, in a publication entitled the *Botanic Garden*, gives an account of the execution of criminals in Java by darts poisoned with the *Tienté*. A few minutes, he states, after the criminals are wounded, they tremble violently, utter fearful cries, and perish amid horrible convulsions in ten or fifteen minutes. This shrub is not to be confounded with the celebrated *upas-tree*, one of the largest fruit-trees of Java, with the fabulous accounts of which a traveller named Foersch amused our grandfathers.

Strychnine, which in our own country is exclusively prepared from *nux vomica*, is a white crystalline substance, but in the chemists' shops it is usually to be seen in the

form of powder. It is odourless, but its taste is so intensely bitter, as to be perceptible when one part is diluted in a million parts of water. Its bitterness led to the unfounded and mischievous rumour that it was used in the manufacture of bitter beer. This brilliant idea originating (upon what grounds is not known) with a French chemist, was for years noticed by a French professor to his pupils in the lecture-room; thence it found its way into the columns of the Times, and created a panic among the patrons of Messrs. Bass and Allsopp, that was only allayed after those gentlemen had been put to considerable trouble and expense by having their beers repeatedly analysed, and throwing open their gigantic breweries to the scrutiny of the wondering public. Within the last few days the Times has again alarmed us by a suspicion of our own correspondent, that artillery horses are being poisoned wholesale at Galata-serai. Chemical analysis will soon decide the truth of this suspicion; in the meantime, in spite of the symptoms (which however do not all correspond with those of strychnia—for instance the swelling of the muscles, whatever that may mean), the apparent absence of motive for poisoning the horses, and the extreme improbability of the animals drinking water rendered bitter by poisonous doses of strychnia, will incline most persons to the hope that the present rumour is as false, if not as unfounded, as the one of eighteen hundred and fifty-two.

As an article of the Pharmacopœia, strychnine is used in the same class of diseases as *nux vomica*. Curiously enough, it has been suggested, though not by followers of Hahnemann, as a remedy for the only disease which resembles it in its effects—tetanus; but there is no case recorded of its having been so used, even on one of the lower animals.

The action of strychnine is about six times as violent as the extract of *nux vomica*. Dr. Christison says: "I have killed a dog in two minutes with the sixth part of a grain injected in the form of an alkaline solution into the chest. I have seen a wild boar killed in the same manner with the third of a grain in ten minutes." Pelletier says: "Half a grain blown into the mouth of a dog produced death in five minutes."

Medical literature abounds with instances of men and women having been poisoned by it both by accident and intentionally. A physician—Dr. Warner—died after taking half a grain of the sulphate of strychnine in mistake for morphia.

In eighteen hundred and forty-five, a girl, thirteen years old, in the Edinburgh Infirmary, took by way of a joke three pills, each containing a quarter of a grain, belonging to another patient. She died in about an hour after she had swallowed the poison.

In eighteen hundred and forty-three a German lady, for whom *nux vomica* had

been prescribed, was seized with convulsions and fits of tetanus. The apothecary's lad through an "unhappy mistake" had substituted two drachms of the extract for one of the tincture, thereby augmenting the strength of the dose ten times. Fortunately the result was not fatal. Twenty or thirty drops of a mixture containing aniseed was taken every five or ten minutes, and the lady recovered.

In eighteen hundred and fifty-three occurred another instance of poisoning by mistake. The chemist misnamed or misunderstood the prescription he was ordered to make up, and instead of sending a mixture containing two scruples of "*strychnos nux vomica*," he sent two scruples of *nux vomica* and two of strychnine. Death was the result of the blunder.

It would be impossible to relate anything that would exhibit more plainly the thoughtless manner in which prescriptions may be made up. One other instance, however, may be mentioned, as it displays the class of men at whose mercy we are placed by illness. It happened in the neighbourhood of Romsley, in eighteen hundred and forty-eight. The statement which the chemist read to the coroner and jury at the inquest of the unfortunate lady whose death was occasioned by his culpable carelessness, gives the best account of the accident: "On Monday last," stated the chemist, "I was called into my shop, where I saw the head nurse in Captain Smyth's family. I passed the compliment, and asked her how she was; and she did the same. She said she wanted some black draughts for the children. I began putting up the draughts and entered into general conversation. After I had put up the draughts, she said, 'I think Mrs. Smyth wants some more of the medicine that she took last, at all events I will take one bottle.' I told my assistant to get the prescription-book that I might see the prescription. I saw it contained salicine; I went up some steps to get the salicine, which is kept on an upper shelf. The shelf is in one corner of the shop where I keep things not often used. I took down, as I thought, the salicine and weighed out nine grains of it." This, he went on to state, was put in a bottle, labelled "the mixture" as before, and carried away by the servant. "The following morning," continued Mr. Jones, "after I had breakfasted and gone up-stairs to dress, I went into the shop as usual; my young man said to me 'Did you see Captain Smyth's servant gallop into town this morning?' 'I saw,' said the lad, 'Mr. Taylor, the surgeon, go off directly afterwards.' I turned towards my desk and saw the bottle I had used the previous night. I took it up and saw that it was labelled 'strychnine,' I said, 'Oh! my God! I have given this in mistake to Mrs. Smyth!'"

A verdict of manslaughter was returned against the chemist. The jury could have

come to no other decision. Here was a man, reported to have been almost proverbial for his correctness in attending to prescriptions, passing the compliment to a nursery maid, and entering into what he was pleased to call "general conversation," while he dispensed his medicines. He then reached from a shelf—on which are huddled together drugs the most innocent and the most poisonous—a bottle labelled strychnine. But the label is neglected—nine grains of the deadly poison are duly weighed out—the draught is made up, and despatched with comfortable assurance inscribed upon the bottle "the mixture as before." Fortunately—and it is much to the credit of the dispensing chemists—these accidents are not very common; it would be useless to attempt to insist by law upon such precautionary measures as blue bottles, or yellow labels, or poison closets, or a poison-dispensing assistant, or any other of the dozen plans that are invariably suggested whenever we are startled by a case of accidental poisoning. Each chemist must be aware what are the wisest precautions for himself to adopt, but no special legislation is likely to aid a better observance of such measures if the consciousness of their position, and the dread of criminal punishment are not sufficient to deter even the most careful druggist from occasionally leaving their business to incompetent assistants, or from dispensing their medicines hurriedly or incautiously.

Those who prescribe are scarcely less liable to mistakes than those who dispense. The other day, a physician in Paris unintentionally prescribed for a lady two pills, each containing one grain of strychnine. The poison was swallowed, and, wonderful to relate, without a fatal result. Within a still more recent date, a gentleman in London has had an equally miraculous escape. He had been recommended, by an eminent physician, under certain circumstances, to send to the chemist for one-third of a grain of morphia; instead of which he sent for three grains. They were sent him in three pills, which the invalid took one after the other. He luckily became very sick, and soon recovered.

Scarcely a year passes without cases occurring of murder or suicide, in which strychnine is the agent made use of; and such is certain to be the case as long as there is free trade in the sale of drugs—as long as grocers are permitted to sell Battle's vermin-killer, or preparations of a similar description, to every person who looks for them. The advantages and difficulties, however, of restricting the sale of drugs have been so often argued, that it is useless to repeat them. We hasten to say what little is known of the antidotes of strychnine. Tannin has already been mentioned; its good effects rest chiefly on the authority of continental physicians. M. Tilley, in eighteen hundred and forty-one, published a case in which a spoonful of

laurel water, which would contain some tannin, was given after a tetanic fit. The patient vomited immediately afterwards; another spoonful was then given, upon which the spasms became less violent, and entirely disappeared after a third spoonful of the laurel water.

In eighteen hundred and forty-two, Dr. Lüdorche prescribed tannin in a case where half a grain of strychnine had been swallowed—and death did not ensue. That the preservation of life depended upon the tannic acid requires further proof.

In the meantime another foreigner, M. Donné, of Paris, has stated that he has found iodine, bromine, and chlorine to be antidotes for the alkaloid of nux vomica, as well as for the other vegetable alkaloids. One grain of strychnine, followed immediately by tincture of iodine, was given to animals, which sustained no harm; but a delay of ten minutes rendered the antidote useless. No experiments appear to have been carried out to discover if the same advantages can be derived in cases of poisoning by nux vomica itself.

In the American Journal of Sciences, October, eighteen hundred and fifty-five, a perfectly new antidote is mentioned, which, should it prove on further trial satisfactory, will have the great advantage of being always at hand: this is lard. Its antidotal properties are founded upon the following circumstance. A gentleman having been much annoyed by some dogs, resolved to poison them. For this purpose a piece of meat, containing one grain of strychnine, was placed on the ground beside some lard. A dog was observed to eat both meat and lard without being poisoned. The next night three pieces of meat were laid down containing strychnine, and no lard placed near it. In the morning three dogs were found dead. In nine instances, in which lard was given with the strychnine, the animals did not die. In eleven cases, where no lard was given, all died. Half a grain was sufficient to produce death; but three grains failed when lard was used.

What are the tests for strychnine? Do any exist? or is the poison as subtle as it is powerful, accomplishing its frightful work of torture and death without leaving a trace of its presence behind?

Tests there are, and plenty. The subject has been carefully and laboriously worked at, both by chemists and physiologists; and from time to time new means of detecting the poison have been discovered, rivalling each other in delicacy, until one of the most distinguished physiologists of the age has succeeded in demonstrating the presence of so minute an atom as the twenty-five-hundredth part of a grain.

If nitric acid be dropped upon powdered nux vomica, an orange-red colour is produced. The same is the case with strychnine, as it is

ordinarily met with in the shops, which is always more or less impure. But when the strychnine is quite pure, no change occurs. It was therefore necessary, on the discovery of strychnine, to search for some other substance which would be entirely depended on. In the course of a few years, several tests were discovered. In eighteen hundred and forty-three, a French chemist, M. Marchand, announced that when strychnine is rubbed with peroxide of lead, and sulphuric acid with some nitric acid, a blue mass is formed, which becomes successively violet, red, and yellow. Another chemist soon found that oxide of manganese has a very similar effect. Another test is chromate of potash, which produces a magnificent violet colour. Chloride of gold, when added to strychnine dissolved in acetic acid causes a yellowish white powder to be formed.

But besides these and several other chemical tests, the presence of a poison which acts with the characteristic violence of strychnine is capable of physiological proof; that is to say, if a portion of the suspected substance be introduced into the system of a living creature, and convulsion and spasm ensue, we may infer with certainty that strychnine is present.

This mode of proof, in addition to the ordinary tests, has been made use of at the recent case of poisoning at Leeds with great success. Two mice, two rabbits, and a guinea-pig were inoculated with the spirituous extract obtained from the stomach. The first mouse died in two minutes, the second in twelve minutes, and one rabbit in fifty minutes from the first introduction of the poison. The symptoms preceding death were in each case general distress, disturbed respiration, twitchings and jerkings of the limbs, and rigidity of the body. The other rabbit suffered similarly, but after lying for a while apparently dead, it eventually recovered. In the guinea-pig the spasms were not so violent, but the next day the animal was found dead. Here the evidence thus obtained was most conclusive. But it is easy to suppose that life might be destroyed by a dose of strychnine, and yet that sufficient poison might not be procured after death to act secondarily upon an animal the size of a rabbit, or even a mouse; the physiological test, in short, would have been pronounced a failure from its want of delicacy, had not Dr. Marshall Hall, who has paid much attention to the action of strychnine, resolved upon trying similar experiments upon frogs, in whom, as in all other cold-blooded animals, the nervous force is far better observed than in the higher classes.

He commenced his experiments by immersing a frog in water in which was dissolved one thirty-third of a grain of a salt of strychnine. The frog died, after exhibiting the usual phenomena. Another frog was destroyed by being subjected in the same

manner to the influence of the one-fiftieth of a grain. These frogs were not affected in so striking a manner as Dr. Hall had hoped; they had been some time removed from the pools; the experiments were shortly afterwards continued upon young male frogs fresh from their native swamps, these being the most susceptible; and by the twelfth of January, eighteen hundred and fifty-six, he was able to state that he had been enabled to detect the one-thousandth of a grain.

On the twenty-ninth of March he communicated the result of further experiments, which are in the highest degree satisfactory. He had detected by means of the strychnoscopic frog the one two-thousand five hundredth of a grain. He had, moreover, destroyed a cat by one-sixth of a grain, had had the stomach prepared so as to get rid of all unnecessary matters, and after the lapse of some time, had placed in it successively three frogs. What Dr. Hall terms strychnism was induced in all three. How small a quantity of strychnine remained in the stomach, it is impossible to say; but that it must have been extremely minute is manifest, since a sixth of a grain is almost the minimum that will destroy a cat, and therefore almost the whole of it must have been absorbed by the blood-vessels, in the destruction of that animal. Especial thanks are due to Dr. Marshall Hall for the immediate publicity he has given to his interesting experiments. He has thus dissipated the fatal delusion that strychnine cannot, like mineral poisons, be detected after death. With our present knowledge, it may be said with perfect confidence, that as no poison produces during life such marked and characteristic effects, so none is more certainly detected after death than the vegetable poison, strychnine.

A FEARFUL NIGHT.

"COME down at once—Ellen is dying!" That was all they said,—seven short words!

I read the telegraph paper again and again, before I could comprehend the full force of the message it bore. My eyes wandered over the regulations of the company, their tariff of prices, the conditions under which they undertook their functions, and at last reverting to the pencilled lines, I roused myself from the stupor into which their receipt had thrown me, and understood their purport. Ellen Luttrell was dying. She was my cousin, my earliest playmate, my embodiment of all that was lovely, pure, and womanly. I have no sister, but had I been so blessed, I could not have loved her with a deeper affection than I bestowed on Ellen. My regard for her was utterly passionless, utterly indescribable. Love, in the common acceptation of the word, had never been mentioned between us; we confided to each other all our flirtations, all the caprices, annoyances, and jealousies which are the lot of young people.

When I was first engaged to Lucy, I was not happy until Ellen could share my joy, could see the object of my choice, and in sweet sisterly tones could congratulate me upon it. It was my delight to see the affection springing up between my cousin and her whom I now call my wife,—to hear their mutual praises of each other, and to think that, until some favoured suitor should come to claim her for his own, Ellen would share our new home. This was not to be. Just before my marriage, my cousin went to Burgundy, on a visit to an old schoolfellow, whose husband, a sickly and consumptive man, was compelled to reside there for the benefit of his health. Her stay in France, which was to have occupied but a few weeks, extended over six months. I heard from her but twice during the interval, but upon the occasion of my marriage, she wrote a long and affectionate letter to Lucy, telling her that she was perfectly happy, and speaking in those mysterious terms which girls love to use, of a certain *Vicomte de Bodé*, who was paying her great attention. Two months after, Ellen suddenly returned to England, accompanied by her brother, who had been dispatched to bring her back. There was a mystery connected with her return which I could never fathom; her mother, indeed, wrote me a plaintive letter lamenting the folly into which young girls usually throw away their affections, and hinting that even Ellen's good sense was not proof against womanly weakness, and that had she not been recalled when she was, she would have been drawn into a marriage which for reasons hereafter to be verbally explained to me, must have been an everlasting source of misery to her. At the receipt of this letter from my aunt, I was, it is needless to say, very much pained, but being forbidden to answer it (for Ellen was unaware that I had been written to, and the sight of a letter in my well-known handwriting would doubtless arouse her suspicions), I was compelled to wait until further information was afforded me. That information never came, and until her brother telegraphed to me in the words with which I have commenced my story, I heard nothing of the Luttrell family.

Within ten minutes after I received the telegraph message, I had thrown a few things into a carpet-bag, had a card stitched on to it with my name, and Boltons, Tamworth, for the address (for I am old-fashioned enough always to direct my luggage in case of loss), and was rattling in a Hansom to Euston Square. I arrived just in time to catch the night mail-train; the platform was thronged, there were Oxford men going back to the university, barristers starting on circuit, sporting men going down for the Leamington steeple-chase, and invalids off to Malvern in search of health. Porters were pushing, rushing against stolid old gentlemen, crushing their

feet with enormous heavily laden barrows, and crying, "by your leave," while the sufferers were clasping their mangled limbs in anguish. The post-office van, with its trim arrangement of sorting boxes, and its travelling-capped clerks, stood gaping to receive the flood of bags pouring into it from the shoulders of the red-coated guards; non-passengers were bidding adieu to their friends at the doors of the carriages; the policemen were busily unhooking the various labels from neighbouring Bletchley to distant Perth, with which the vehicles were bedizened; commercial gents, those knowing travellers, were settling themselves comfortably on the back seats of the second class; the old gentleman who is always late, was being rapidly hurried to his place; and the black-faced stoker was leaning forward, looking out for the signal of the station-master to go a-head, when I sprang into a first-class compartment and took the only vacant seat I found there.

Once started, I looked round upon my travelling companions, who were apparently of the usual stamp. There was a stout, red-faced, elderly, gentleman-farmer looking man, rather flushed with the last pint of port at Simpson's and the exertion of cramming a fat little portmanteau (the corner of which still obstinately protruded) under the seat; there was a thin pale-faced curate, with no whiskers and no shirt-collar, but with a long black coat, and a silk waistcoat buttoning round the throat, a mild, washed-out, limp, afternoon-service style of man, engaged in reading a little book with a brass cross on the back, and "Ye Lyffe of St. Crucifidge," emblazoned on it in red letters. There was a fidgety, pinched-up old lady, with a face so wrinkled as to make one thankful she was a female, as by no earthly means could she have shaved it, who kept perpetually peering into a mottled-looking basket suggestive of sandwiches and sherry-flasks, under apprehension of having lost her ticket; and there was a young man apparently devoted to the stock-broking interest, stiff as to his all-rounder, checked as to his trousers, natty as to his boots, who kept alternately paring his nails, stroking his chin, whistling popular melodies in a subdued tone, and attempting to go to sleep. Finally, on the opposite side to me, and in the further corner, there was a large bundle, the only visible component parts of which were a large poncho cloak, a black beard, and a slouched, foreign-looking hat; but these parts were all so blended and huddled together, that after five minutes sharp scrutiny it would have been difficult to tell what the bundle really was.

I had arrived so late at the station, that I had not had time to provide myself with a book, or even, to render the journey more tedious, by the purchase of an evening paper; so that after settling down in my seat, I had to content myself with a

perusal of Bradshaw, with wondering whether anybody ever went to Ambergate, Flotton Episcopi, or Bolton-le-Moors, and what they did when they got there, and with musing upon Heal's bedsteads, which, according to the advertisement, could be sent free by post, and upon the dismayed gentleman who, in the woodcut, cannot put up his umbrella, and is envious of the syphonia'd individual who finds "comfort in a storm." But this species of amusement, though undeniably exciting at first, palls on repetition, and I soon found myself letting the Bradshaw drop, and endeavouring to seek solace in sleep. To seek, but not to find. To me, sleep in a railway carriage is next to impossible. First the lamp glares in my eyes, and when I try to cover them with my hat, the stiff rim grates over my nose, and scrubs me to desperation; then the cloth-covered sides of the carriage are rough to my face; my legs are cramped, and my feet, in opposition to the rest of my body, go to sleep, and are troubled with pins and needles; and so, after much tossing, and tumbling, and changing from side to side, I sit bolt upright, gazing at the lamp, and thinking over Ellen and the object of my journey, until we arrive at our first halting-place, Bletchley. Here we lose the curate and the stockbroker, the flashing lamps of the latter's dog-cart being seen outside the station yard. The old lady gets out too, under the impression that we are at Crewe, and is only induced to return after much assurance, and, in fact, bodily force on the part of a porter. She, I, the farmer, and the bundle, are left together again, and the train proceeds. And now, worn-out and utterly wearied, I fall asleep in good earnest, and sleep so soundly that I do not rouse till a prolonged "Hoi!" reverberates in my ears, and starting up, I find the lights of Crewe station flashing in my eyes, the farmer and the old lady gone, and a porter holding up my carpet-bag and talking through the carriage window. "A old lady as has just left this carriage," says he, "have tuke a carpet-bag in mistake for her own, she thinks. Does any gent own this here, di-rected to Boltens, Tamworth?"

At these words, the bundle roused, picked itself up, and showed itself to be a young man with a bearded face, and a remarkably bright eye. He seemed about to speak; but I, half-asleep, reclaimed my property, handed out the old lady's luggage, and, as the whistle announced our departure, sank back again in slumber.

I had slept, I suppose, for about three minutes, when I was aroused by a choking, suffocating sensation in my throat, and on opening my eyes, I saw the bearded countenance of the stranger within an inch of my face, his eyes flashing, his nostrils dilated, and his whole frame quivering with emotion; so that his hand, although twisted tightly in

my neckcloth, trembled violently. Surprise for a second numbed my energies, but I soon recollected the practical teaching of my old instructor, the Worcestershire Nobbler, and finding I could free myself by no other means, dealt him a blow with my left hand which sent him staggering to the other end of the carriage. He recovered himself in an instant, and rushed at me again; but this time I was on my guard, and as he advanced I seized his hands by the wrists, and being much the more powerful man, forced him into a seat, and kept him there, never for an instant relaxing my grip. "Let me go!" he hissed between his teeth, speaking in a foreign accent, "Let me go! Scoundrel! coward!—release me!"

Had any third person been present they could not have failed to be amused at the matter of fact tone of my remarks in contrast to the high flown speech of the stranger.

"What the deuce do you mean, sir, by attacking an inoffensive man in this way?" said I, "what's your motive? You don't look like a thief."

"No," he screamed, "'tis you who are the thief, you who would steal from me all that I cherish in the world!"

"Why, I never set eyes on you before!" I exclaimed, getting bewildered and not feeling quite certain whether I was awake or asleep.

"No, but I have heard of you," he replied, "heard of you too often. Tiens! did not you just acknowledge you were going to Boltens!"

"Well, what if I am?" I asked. "You shall never reach your destination," and with a sudden twist he shook my hand from his neck, sprang at my face and struck me with such force that I fell on my back on the floor of the carriage. In falling I dragged my adversary with me, but he was nimbler than I, and succeeded in planting his knee in my throat while he pinned my hands to my sides. Seeing me at his mercy he gave a cry of triumph, then stooping over me scanned my face with such a wild and scaring glance that a glimmering of the truth for the first time flashed across me—the man was mad. I turned faint sick at the idea, and closed my eyes. "Ah ha!" shrieked the lunatic, "you pale, you tremble! You, an Englishman, change colour like a girl! You shall be yet another colour before I leave you, your cheeks shall be blue, your eyes red, Entends tu, misérable?" And as he spoke he knelt with such force on my throat that I felt my eyes were starting from their sockets; I struggled convulsively, but the more I writhed the more tightly did he press me with his knee, until at length the anguish grew insupportable, and I fainted.

How long I remained insensible, I know not; it can have been but for a very few minutes, however, and when I came to myself I found the fresh night air blowing over my face, I saw the door of the carriage open, and felt the

madman endeavouring to drag me to the aperture with the evident intention of throwing me out upon the line.

And now I felt that the crisis was at hand, and that it was but a question of time whether I could hold out until we arrived at the station, or whether I should be murdered by the lunatic. We were both young men, and though, perhaps, I was naturally the more powerful, yet his position gave him great advantages, as I was still extended on my back, while he was stooping over me, and while my limbs were cramped he had free play for all his energies. On seeing me recovering from the swoon, he uttered a short, sharp cry, and, bending lower, twined his hands in my cravat. Now was my opportunity; his back was towards the door, his face so close to mine, that I could feel his breath upon my cheek. Gathering all my remaining strength together, I seized him by the ancles, and literally hurled him over my head on to his face. He fell heavily, striking his head against the opposite door, and lay stunned and bleeding. In a second I was on my feet ready to grapple him, but as I rose the engine shrieked our approaching advent to the station, and almost before I could raise my fallen foe we ran in to Tamworth. The first person I saw on the platform was Ellen's brother, to whom, after hearing that she was out of danger, I, in a few words, narrated my adventure, and pointed out the stranger, who, still insensible, was supported by some of the porters.

"Let's have a look at the fellow!" said Fred Luttrell—an unsophisticated youth—but he no sooner had set eyes on the pallid face than he drew back, exclaiming, "By Jove, it's Bodé!"

And so it was; and by the aid of explanation, I received afterwards from Fred Luttrell, I was, in some measure, enabled to account for the attack made upon me. It appears that the Vicomte de Bodé had seen Ellen while in Burgundy, and fell desperately in love with her; but his addresses were utterly discouraged by her friends, for one reason alone—but that a most powerful one. His family were afflicted with hereditary insanity, and he himself had already on two occasions shown the taint. Of course it was impossible to declare to him the real reason of his rejection, and he was accordingly informed that Ellen's parents had long since pledged her hand to a connexion of her own.

After her departure he grew moody and irritable, and it was judged advisable to have him watched; but he managed to elude the observation of his keepers, and to escape to England. Ellen's address was well known to him; he was proceeding thither; and when he heard the very house mentioned by the porter at Crewe as the direction of my luggage, he doubtless, in his wandering mind, pictured me as his rival and supplanter.

My dear Ellen recovered, and so did the

Vicomte—that is to say, from my assault. As to his madness, it stood by him, poor creature, until he died.

BANKING.

It happens in this world that the person who is well off; the happy man who is blessed with an abundance of goods, has still one drawback to his exultation; for, almost always it occurs that he has not enough of some one thing—of several things, perhaps—at the same time that he has more than enough of some other thing, or things. While somebody else, also well off in his way, has a corresponding deficiency of some other different thing, and a similar superabundance of some particular commodity, which is not the same commodity as that which constitutes the superfluity of his well-stored neighbour. Peter has more wheat; which he and his family grind into flour, and bake into loaves, than he and his can contrive to eat, although they were to sit up all night to do so: Paul has more hides; which his sons and his serving-men tan into leather, and fabricate into shoes, than his entire household can possibly wear out, even though each individual member were a Wandering Jew. And so it is throughout the globe. With the exceptions of the class known as the Poor, everybody has more of some one article than is needed for his private wants: more wine, more wool, more potatoes, or more wood and coal. It would be simpler and less inconvenient if every family, or every head of a household, had, or produced, a moderate quantity of each separate article, just sufficient for his annual consumption; he would then be independent, beholden to nobody, and an immense amount of trouble and discontent would thus be spared. But it is not so; and never will be, till all men are born with equal talents, strength, and stature; until all climates are equally genial, and all soils put forth the same fertility. Possibly, it was not intended by the Creator of all things that human beings, whether singly or in small knots with a common interest, should be independent in their self-sufficiency, or that the fate of man should be to live in solitary and exclusive isolation.

In any case, there is no help for this state of mundane affairs; those who have no shoes must get shoes somehow, those who have no loaf must obtain a loaf somewhere. There are two ways of effecting the purpose:—First, if you are strong and unscrupulous, you may look out for some weaker person possessed of shoes or bread, as the case may be, and may then take them from him by main force, leaving him to help himself as he can. Perhaps he will yield without resistance or revenge; perhaps he will either wound you at the time or will wait to retaliate when you are in a defenceless state. This is ROBBERY and its consequences; it was, and is, the

practice of savages ; its habitual exercise is inconsistent with the existence of civilised society ; it is the grand original motive power of war, even of that war which has just been checked.

But secondly ; if you are just, and will make no wrongful use of the strength given you, when you are in want of shoes you will search after a person who has more pairs than he requires himself, and you will induce him to part with the needful supply by offering him in exchange a quantity, to be agreed upon by mutual consent, of your own excess of bread-stuffs. Tempted by such a proviso as this, he will gladly give up the stipulated shoes ; he will even thank you for the accommodation to himself ; he will invite you to a renewal of the friendly interchange. More than that ; perhaps at some future time he will consent to advance you shoes on credit, remembering that, possibly, one of these days he may have to ask you to give him credit for penny rolls. This is barter, or commerce, or TRADE and its effects ; without its exercise, civilised society is impossible ; it is the most influential persuader of PEACE. The peace which has just been brought about, like almost every other peace, owes much to the necessitous want of trade felt by some, at least, of the belligerents.

Barter, then, or trade, being so excellent, desirable, and necessary a thing, the next point is to simplify and aid it as much as possible—to make its machinery work smoothly, without unwieldy jerks or blank full-stops. Sacks of corn are heavy, hides and jack-boots are cumbrous, to carry about from place to place to be given in exchange for whatever you want. To avoid the inconveniences of actual barter, and at the same time to secure the benefits resulting from it, you look out for some general representative of value, called money, which may help to facilitate your dealings. What shall be that representative, that money, is the important problem you have now to solve. It must be something portable, not liable to waste or loss, easily divisible into portions to serve for small amounts, and at the same time of sufficient intrinsic value to be used for the payment of larger sums. Various material objects have been tried—rare shells, pearls, and jewels compose one category, the precious metals another. Against the three first articles there lies the grand objection of their indivisibility when of high value, and their consequent uselessness to serve as small change. The very first—namely, shells, though handy counters to fulfil humble claims, are cumbrous in the condition of accumulated cash. Wheat would make just as good a circulating medium as cowries ; it has intrinsic worth, is easily divided into fractional quantities, and is a money which would pass, or go (that is, its value would be recognised), far and wide, wherever wheat was known and eaten. Consequently, gold, silver,

and copper, in various states of purity or alloy, as dust, in ingots, or as coin, have been fixed upon as money by the civilised world, because they represent value in the three several grades of high, moderate, and low ; because they can be adapted to any proportion or system of subdivision, by the processes of the mint, because they are little liable to waste or destruction, and are also not likely to be suddenly increased or diminished in any considerable quantity ; that is, they are not subject to great fluctuations of intrinsic value.

But the radical defect of all money hitherto discovered is its inability to serve as a standard of value. It is a measure, but not the fixed and standard measure, of the values of the commodities it represents. If only a unit of value could be calculated which should prove as determinate a measure of worth as the French *mètre*, or even the English foot-rule is of extension, it would be an immense advantage gained to commerce—it would simplify business transactions incalculably and marvellously. But as yet, sovereigns, francs, or cents, are no more than the most preferable approximative measures of value that can be devised. The government in each respective state may do its best to compel the fixity of the worth of those metals which constitute its coin ; but success has ever been very far indeed from attending their efforts.

For all commodities are said to be dear or cheap upon a given spot, according as they are more or less in request on that spot : that is, according as they are more or less abundant,—according as they are more or less easy to be had. But gold and silver, not to mention copper, are themselves marketable commodities ; they shift their place, are carried hither and thither, are made to abound in one locality while they are scarce in another, and therefore become dear or cheap in their turn, even like the goods which they represent. This variation takes place quite irrespective of the varying abundance with which they are extracted from the earth at different epochs and in different regions, which constitutes an additional agent in causing fluctuations in their market price. It is, therefore, a palpable fallacy to state that the precious metals are the standard by which all other commodities are measured. Other commodities measure them, as much as they measure the commodities ; and it is no contradiction of terms to say, that they themselves are dear or cheap, as the case may be. The State may stamp its reverse and obverse on coin as a warrant of the metal's purity ; but it cannot prevent a guinea, issued at twenty-one shillings, from rising in price to six-and-twenty. Between money and goods there are mutual actions and reactions, alternate varying attractive forces, just as much as there are between the earth and the moon.

Again, trade increases, productions are multiplied, because the surface of the world

is more densely peopled and more actively cultivated. It results, that the amount of precious metals amongst us is not sufficient in quantity to serve all the purposes of money; and the disproportion threatens to increase instead of to diminish. Industrial produce seems likely to augment in a higher ratio than the produce of the gold-fields. But for the discovery of the Californian and Australian mines, this want would now be more urgently felt than it is. But they have acted as palliatives rather than as remedies to the deficiency; even under existing circumstances, the production of coin is limited within certain bounds, and is quite inadequate to fulfil the demands of the world's ever increasing commerce.

To meet the difficulty, recourse has been had to the invention of paper money, or bank-notes. As trading by means of the precious metals is more convenient than simple barter, so paper is, in some respects, more convenient than metal coin, especially in the case of large sums. Still, paper is an equivalent for the precious metals only inasmuch as it is convertible into them at the will of the holder. If gold and silver coin are the representatives of value, paper is merely the representative of a representative, and in that alone lies its utility. Paper money combines a paradoxical union of merits and defects. It is very liable to waste and utter destruction, but it may be suddenly increased or diminished as circumstances require; it is of very low intrinsic value, but it does not lock up a vast amount of unproductive capital, as is the case with a metallic currency. A very great defect in a paper currency is, that it is not cosmopolite, as metal is. A wheat currency, like that supposed above, would be more universally received than a paper one. The further a provincial bank-note travels from home, the more its value is depreciated, till at last it arrives at nullity. There are many places in the world where a thousand pound Bank of England note would purchase less than a copper farthing. Against this may be set, what in theory is a great merit,—that paper money approximates nearer to being a fixed standard of value than metallic money; paper money is not so completely a marketable commodity as the precious metals; the temptation to export it is comparatively slight, because, abroad, it is less useful than in the country where it was first issued.

The currencies, then, of modern times are composed of metallic and paper money jointly. The puzzle has been, and still remains, how to regulate the proportions they should bear to each, so as to avoid inconvenience. The control of those proportions has mostly remained in the hands of parties styled bankers, whether private individuals, persons connected with State affairs, or the State itself. It is curious that the profession of banking should have no definition or descrip-

tion, either by common law or statute, and that there should be in England no company or corporation called bankers, although there is in the city of London a company called goldsmiths to which most of the persons called bankers belong. By custom, we call a man a banker who has an open shop, with proper counters, servants, and books, for receiving other people's money, in order to keep it safe, and return it upon demand; and when any man has opened such a shop, we call him a banker, without inquiring whether any man has given him money to keep or no; for this is a trade where no apprenticeship is required, it having never yet been supposed that a man who sets up the trade of banking could be sued upon the statute of Queen Elizabeth, which enacts, that none shall use any art or mystery then used, but such as have served an apprenticeship in the same. The interpretation clause of Peel's Act of eighteen hundred and forty-four enacts "that the term Banker shall extend and apply to all Corporations, Societies, Partnerships, and Persons, and every individual Person carrying on the Business of Banking, whether by the issue of Bank-notes or otherwise, except only the Governor and Company of the Bank of England." The Lombard Jews in Italy kept benches, or banchi, in the market-place, where they exchanged money and bills, whence our word Bank. When a banker failed, his bench was broken by the populace; from Banco-rotto we have our term Bank-rupt.

According to Gilbart's very able Elements of Banking, a banker is a dealer in money. He is the intermediate party between the borrower and the lender. He receives money from one party, which he lends to another; and the difference between the terms at which he borrows and those at which he lends, forms the source of his profit. He thus draws into active operation those small sums of money which were previously unproductive in the hands of private individuals; and at the same time furnishes accommodation to those who have need of additional capital to carry on their commercial transactions. The business of banking consists chiefly in receiving deposits of money, upon which interest may or may not be allowed; in making advances of money, principally in the way of discounting bills; and in effecting the transmission of money from one place to another. Private banks in metropolitan cities are usually the agents of the banks in the provinces, and charge a commission on their transactions. In making payments, many country banks issue their own notes.

The disposable means of a bank consist of: First, capital laid down by the partners or shareholders. Secondly, the amount of money lodged by their customers. Thirdly, the amount of notes they are able to keep out in circulation. Fourthly, the amount of money in the course of transmission,—that is, money

they have received, and are to repay, in some distant place, at a future time. These disposable means are employed: First, in discounting bills. Secondly, in advances of money in the form of cash credits, loans, or overdrawn accounts. Thirdly, in the purchase of government or other securities. Fourthly, a part is kept in the banker's till, to meet the current demands. Of these four ways of employing the capital of the bank, three are productive, and one is unproductive. The discounting of bills yields interest,—the loans, and the cash credits, and the overdrawn accounts, yield interest,—the government securities yield interest,—the money in the till yields no interest.

Banks are useful as places of security for the deposit of money; their first origin in this country was a desire on the part of the merchants of London, to obtain a place where they might lodge their money in safety. Banking increases the productive capital of the nation; the various small sums of money which would have remained unproductive in the hands of individuals, are collected into large amounts in the hands of bankers who employ it in granting facilities to trade. At the origin of banking, the new-fashioned bankers, as they were called, allowed a certain rate of interest for money placed in their hands. The banks of Scotland carry this practice to the greatest extent, as they receive upon interest so low an amount as ten pounds; and they also allow interest on the balance of a running account. Many of the country bankers in England allow interest on the balance of a running account, and charge commission on the amount of money withdrawn. The London bankers generally do not allow interest on deposit, but neither do they charge commission. All their profits are derived from the use of their customers' money. The banks of Scotland do not charge commission, although they allow interest on deposits; but then those banks have a profit by the issue of their notes. The London bankers do not issue notes.

Another advantage conferred upon society by bankers, is that they make advances to persons who want to borrow money. People engaged in commerce are thus enabled to augment their capital, and consequently their wealth. In Scotland, branch banks are sometimes established in poor districts, with a view of obtaining a future profit from the prosperity which the bank will introduce. Again; bankers transmit money from one part of the country to another, cheaply, and without risk to the owner thereof. Commercial travellers, who go collecting money, derive great advantage from the banks; by delivering their cash to a bank, which remits it securely to its destination, they are relieved from an incumbrance which would have occasioned them great care and anxiety. Again; where banks are established, it is easy to obtain change; small or large notes

are procurable as respectively needed. Banks usually supply their customers and the neighbourhood with silver; this is very convenient to those who have to pay large sums in wages, or who purchase in small amounts the commodities in which they trade. If silver should be too abundant, the banks will receive it, either as a deposit, or in exchange for their notes.

Banking is the means of a great saving of time in money transactions. How much less time does it take to write a cheque, than to count out a sum of money in pounds, shillings, and pence! The banker incurs all the risk of receiving counterfeit or deficient coin, or forged notes; the banker takes upon himself the trouble and expense of presenting the bills and drafts which a merchant may draw upon his customers, or which he may receive in exchange for his goods. This circumstance alone must cause an immense saving of expense to a mercantile house in the course of a year. By keeping a banker in London, you have a continual referee to your respectability. This gives credit, and credit is money. It also enables you to ascertain the respectability of other parties who keep bankers. Among nearly all the bankers in London, the practice is established of giving information to each other as to the respectability of their customers. By means of banks, too, people are able to preserve an authentic record of their annual expenditure. In them they find a secure place of deposit for any deeds, papers, or other property that may require particular care. You go into the country, and you send your plate or jewellery, your last will and testament, or your life-policy, to your banker, who will lock them up in his strong room, and keep them safe from fire and thieves. In bankers, people find a ready channel of obtaining information that will be of service to them in the way of their business. And lastly, banking exercises a powerful influence upon the morals of society. It tends to produce integrity and punctuality in pecuniary engagements. There is many a man who would be deterred from dishonesty by the frown of a banker, though he might care but little for the admonitions of a bishop. From all this, it is only a necessary inference that the profession of a banker should be honourable and influential.

A very important feature in London banking is the clearing-house, established about seventy-five years ago, by some of the London bankers, for the purpose of facilitating their exchanges with each other. The object in view was to exchange bills and cheques against bills and cheques, and thus be enabled to carry on their business with a less amount of capital. But while bankers were endeavouring to promote their own interest, they promoted at the same time the interest of the public. The sums liberated from employment in this way became available for em-

ployment in agriculture, manufacture, and commerce. Whenever any banker, therefore, is excluded from the clearing-house, and is consequently obliged to keep a larger amount of cash in his coffers, his available capital is so far reduced, and thus the agriculture, manufactures, and commerce of the country receive less encouragement.

Country private banks cannot have more than six partners, differing in this respect from joint-stock banks, which may have as many as a thousand partners. Country private banks are banks of deposit, of loan, and of discount. As banks of deposit, they usually allow interest on both deposits and balances of current accounts, and charge a commission on the amount of the transactions. In commercial or manufacturing districts their advances are usually made by way of discount; in agricultural districts, frequently by loans. They remit money by issuing bills or letters of credit on London or they direct their agents to make payments to bankers or other parties resident in London. As banks of circulation, they have at various times occupied a large portion of public attention, and have been the subject of much legislation. Those bankers who issue notes must take out a licence, which costs thirty pounds, and must be renewed every year. They may re-issue any notes not above the value of one hundred pounds as often as they think proper. And should any of the firm die or remove from business, the notes may be issued by the remaining partners. But they cannot be re-issued by a new firm which does not include any member belonging to the firm by whom the notes were first issued. If the half of a note be lost or stolen, a banker cannot be compelled to give a new note in exchange for the remaining half; but if it can be proved that one half of a note is burnt, or otherwise destroyed, then the holder may perhaps recover the note from the banker. In such cases, the bankers always pay the value of the note on receiving a respectable indemnity. Bankers may be compelled to pay whole notes that have been lost or stolen, provided the holder has given actual value for them.

The Bank of England originated in a loan of one million two hundred thousand pounds, granted to the state by a company, chartered in sixteen hundred and ninety-four, as the Governor and Company of the Bank of England. This charter has been repeatedly renewed. From that transaction to the present day, the government has ever been in the undignified position of a borrower from a private company. The legislature is put in the anomalous position of making laws for, and requiring obedience from, its own creditor—it's master, in short, or at least the body to whom it is under obligations. Of course, under no circumstances whatever can the Bank Charter be altogether withdrawn, until the debt, now amounting to more than

eleven million pounds, is repaid. For these eleven millions, besides other securities, making altogether fourteen millions, the Bank is authorised to issue notes without any corresponding amount of gold. The very fact that this debt is not paid, is a proof that paper money is necessary for the expansion of our circulation, and that gold and silver coin alone are insufficient as a circulating medium. The last renewal of the Bank Charter was in eighteen hundred and forty-four, to continue until the expiration of twelve months' notice, to be given after the first day of August, 'fifty-five. The notice has not been given yet.

The Bank of England is governed by a court of directors, consisting of twenty-four members. These are selected from the mercantile classes of London, virtually by the other directors, who form what is called a House List. They recommend certain persons to be chosen as directors; and the proprietors always follow this recommendation. The court hold their meetings every Thursday, and they then receive a report of the transactions of the preceding week. The executive administration, in the meantime, is in the hands of the governor and deputy-governor, who may be advised or assisted by the committee of treasury. This committee is composed of those directors who have held the office of governor, of the existing governor and deputy-governor, and of the director who is intended to be the next deputy-governor. A director is at first an ordinary director, and attends the weekly meetings of the court. In turn he becomes, for one year, a member of the committee of treasury. This committee meet once a-week, and at such other times as they may be called together specially by the governor.

The Bank of England is a bank of issue, to the extent of fourteen millions against that amount of security set apart for that purpose. She can issue to any further amount against lodgments of gold and silver, as regulated by the Act of forty-four. She is likewise a bank of deposit, of loan, and of discount. She allows no interest on any portion of her deposits, nor permits any accounts to be overdrawn. The Bank of England is also the banker of the government. The original loan of twelve hundred thousand pounds was money wisely and cleverly laid out. She has always a large amount of public deposits, on which she allows no interest. She receives the public revenue, and pays the dividends on the national debt. The Bank of England consented to establish branches in the year eighteen hundred and twenty-six, at the suggestion of Lord Liverpool, in order to extend to the provinces the advantages of a secure circulation. This was considered the grand desideratum at that time, in consequence of the numerous failures that had recently taken place among the country bankers.

Sir Robert Peel's measures, which are now those in force, had in view the object to put the entire circulation of the United Kingdom under the control of the legislature, in a great degree through the supremacy of the Bank of England. The promoters of those views hoped to establish the monetary institutions of the country on a safe and firm foundation, capable of counteracting all future danger of mercantile panics. Now, there are two main points which the Act of 'forty-four regulates: First, the terms on which the Bank of England shall be allowed to carry on business, that is, what it shall contribute to the expense of managing the National Debt; in short, how much a-year the Bank shall pay for its licence to trade in money and notes. Secondly, the Act lays down the law respecting the entire amount of notes to be issued throughout the land, and by whom. Its tendency is to confine the issue of notes to the Bank of England ultimately, all the while that it respects existing rights. To that conclusion must come we at last. No person other than a banker, who, on the sixth day of May, one thousand eight hundred and forty-four, was lawfully issuing his own bank-notes, shall make or issue bank-notes in any part of the United Kingdom. Thus, no new bank of issue can start up and open shop. But established banks must die out and become extinct, if they happen to fall into decrepitude. It is enacted, That if any banker, in any part of the United Kingdom, who, after the passing of this Act, shall be entitled to issue bank-notes, shall become bankrupt, or shall cease to carry on the business of a banker, or shall discontinue the issue of bank-notes, either by agreement with the Governor and Company of the Bank of England, or otherwise, it shall not be lawful for such banker at any time thereafter to issue any such notes. Where two or more banks became united, the paper circulation of one of them would be forfeited. Thus, bankers once ceasing to issue notes, may not resume their vocation should they change their minds, and repent them of the step taken. They cannot, like other retired tradesmen, return to business should their leisure weary them. A banker who dies professionally, is considered to be professionally childless; he leaves no heir behind him. And yet he does not depart exactly intestate; the Bank of England becomes the sole legatee to his paper property, though not quite to the whole of it. If any banker, who, on the sixth day of May, one thousand eight hundred and forty-four, was issuing his own bank-notes, shall cease to issue them, it shall be lawful for her Majesty in Council, at any time after the cessation of such issue, upon the application of the said Governor and

Company, to authorise and empower that body to increase the amount of securities in the issue department beyond the total sum of fourteen million pounds, and thereupon to issue additional Bank of England notes to an amount not exceeding such increased amount of securities specified in such order in Council: provided always that such increased amount of securities shall in no case exceed the proportion of two-thirds of the amount of bank-notes which the banker so ceasing to issue may have been authorised to issue.

But private banks, even with an indefinite term of existence, still are mortal, although we may not yet be looking out for the apotheosis of Messrs. Coutts and Co.; but the Bank of England is immortal; and assimilates into its own substance two-thirds of the blood which flows no longer in the veins of departed banks. Moreover, existing and continuing banks may issue for the future no more than they were issuing at the time when the Act was passed; they must render to the Commissioners of Stamps and Taxes a weekly account of their paper circulation, giving the amount for every day during the week. The Commissioners may cause the bankers' books to be inspected, if requisite, to verify the return, with a penalty of a hundred pounds in case of refusal. And, bankers entitled to issue notes, but who consent to issue Bank of England notes instead of their own, are rewarded by a composition of one per cent. on the amount of such notes kept in circulation; this arrangement ceases and determines on the first of August next.

The existing and the approaching opportunities for change, cause the putting of the pertinent question—Upon what principle shall we stereotype the banking institutions of this country, when all around us denotes constant progress? The Bank Charter Acts, as has already been stated, have established a limit in the circulation of bank-notes, beyond which it could never exceed, and their irresistible bias is to limit it still more. But the circulation of 'forty-four was only proportioned to existing wants, whilst, since that period, a considerable augmentation has taken place in the resources and commerce of the country. From tables of imports relative to some few leading branches of trade, it may be demonstrated that Liverpool, Glasgow, Belfast, Manchester, Leeds, and many other places, have trebled in commercial importance. Nevertheless, no corresponding increase is observable in their banking companies—an incongruity which cannot fail to be productive of considerable injury to traders. Consequently, there seems to be an almost general concurrence as to the expediency of enlarging the amount beyond the fourteen millions now issued by the Bank.

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CURACIES.

WHEN the day came in which I was declared the seventeenth wrangler in the list of honours at Cambridge, I thought my fortune was made. The place was, to confess the truth, a little higher than I had expected, but not perhaps higher than I deserved. My friend Jones—who makes a rule of betting twenty to one about everything—had backed me, even, to be senior; and if anything fatal had suddenly happened to the sixteen others, senior I should have been. I had been scholar of my college for some time; I had written (and printed at my own expense) the theological prize essay of my year; and I had had the honour of declaiming against Bishop Burnet and Latitudinarianism in our chapel, to a select congregation of four.

It had been determined, long ago, by my friends, that I should go into the church: not, on the one hand, because there was any family benefice at my service; nor, on the other, that I had a peculiar call for the ministry; but for the simple reason that the clerical profession seemed to offer the position of a gentleman with a certain, however scanty, livelihood. I was better fitted for it—there is no doubt upon the matter whatever—than the majority of those whom I met in the senate-house a year after my leaving college, at the voluntary theological examination. Many of these had, unquestionably, put off their conversion to the very latest moment, and some of them seemed to think that there was a little time left for that still. There were three brothers in particular, I remember, for whom there was one good living then being kept warm, whose father had sent them to try their luck at the Vol: feeling sure that if two out of the three did not succeed in pulling through it, the third would. This actually came to pass, and the emoluments of the living were preserved in the family.

"Sir," it was observed to one of us by my revered tutor (who is of a cynical disposition), "when I look upon these lists of candidates for holy orders, yearly, I am the more convinced of the truth and firmness of that Church of England, which can stand such repeated shocks from within."

I merely say this much—of which every man who has eyes to see, and not merely to

wink at things with, is perfectly cognisant—in order to show that my unfortunate experience and lack of professional success is not owing to any peculiar unfitness of my own. I had never been a fast man, and had as excellent testimonials from my college as could be. I had given much of my time to theology; and, as I have said, distinguished myself publicly in that branch of study. It was my personal desire to become a clergyman; and, if there are other qualifications that may be with modesty put forward as proving my competence for the ministry, I affirm that I possessed them. When, therefore, I had passed my examination, I looked around me with confidence for a curacy.

My opinions, although decided, were sufficiently moderate. I therefore eschewed the offers of both the Guardian and Record newspapers, and applied myself to the advertisements in the Ecclesiastical Gazette. I was a good deal struck, and not at all pleased, by observing that there were just six times as many curates wanting curacies as there were curacies wanting curates; and, of these few, there were several which spoke of "the sphere of usefulness which they had the Christian privilege of offering to labourers in the vineyard," having no stipend attached to them whatever.

As a general rule, I already knew that the more spiritual the wording of an advertisement, the less remunerative are its terms. Therefore, having but very little private fortune, I regarded only the more business-like statements. Amidst a crowd of powerful-voice-and-good-delivery requirements; via-media views (always *view*); indispensabilities; Anglo-Catholic convictions; pure Protestant persuasions, and the like, this simple notice seemed to promise well:—

A Curacy, with title for the Trinity Ordination. Apply personally to Rev. L. A., Credita Regis, Bucks.

Not even earnestness was made a point of, nor the desirability of private means. It was without the trace, in short, of any kind of clerical snare. I took train by the Great Western at once to the nearest station, and drove thence to the Reverend Lacey Alley's. The parish, I was informed, was very small, and the village was like the little Swiss villages that are sold at Interlachen;

there seemed, as I went along, so scanty a population, and so few poor cottages, that I wondered what Mr. Alley could possibly want a curate for. That, however, was not my business, and the place seemed exactly to suit a young divine who had everything to learn. Conversing with the driver of the gig I had hired, upon general local topics, he presently observed with a grin, which, I am sure, my familiarity had not been sufficient to provoke,—

“Cummin to be parson here, sir, under Mr. Lacey Alley?”

“There is,” I observed quietly, “a probability of my becoming his curate.”

“Noa, ye won’t, sir, take my word for it,” he rejoined.

“Indeed! Is the vacancy already filled up?”

“Not as I knows on,” he replied; “but there has been a matter of a dozen young gents arter it lately, and they all goes back by the next train, they does. I have lived within three mile of Credita all my life, and I never knowed one stay much more nor a year there—when he did stay.”

I felt that it would not be delicate to converse with this man upon such a subject further; so I kept silence till we drove through the rectory gates.

It was a very snug little place, and in beautiful order. A honeysuckle was trained over the porch, diffusing a luxurious perfume; and there were grapes all over the house front. The entrance hall had a beautiful model in ivory of the neighbouring cathedral. In the study, wherein I awaited Mr. Alley’s coming, was arranged a great mass of theological learning, and the Bishop of the Diocese (very faithfully your’s) hung over the mantelpiece. Upon a luxurious chair beside the window, there lay a heap of reports of different religious societies. The whole room was pervaded, too, with an agreeable incense, which perhaps (for I was not of course then qualified to judge) may have been the odour of sanctity; but which, had I detected it in college rooms, I should have pronounced to be the scent of Havannah cigars. Presently the rector entered with a very sweet smile: a stout, good-humoured gentleman in spectacles and short black gaiters.

Was I come with an idea of becoming his fellow-labourer? It was his fervent hope that I should be so. Did I admire the village, and surrounding country? It was most kind of me to say that much. I would stay to dine with him surely; and, in the meantime, would I take a stroll with him in the extremely limited grounds?

We went into an old-fashioned garden, with cut yews around a bowling-green, a large arbour and a magnificent mulberry-tree; looked over a hedge of sweetbriar, and admired the points of a sleek cob in the field adjoining; discussed divers clerical matters, and returned at the sound of a little silver bell to dine.

Mr. Lacey Alley was, as I have said, a pleasant-looking, bald old gentleman at all times; but, after dinner, benevolence seemed positively to beam from him in all directions, like light from the sun. When he had got the port back again from my side of the table to his, nursing his right leg upon his left, and sliding down in the comfortable arm-chair to an angle of about one hundred and seventy-five degrees, he might have sat for an allegory of Content, or an incarnation of Plenty.

“The work is very light, you see, Mr. Andrews,” he said, after showing a little sketch of my future duties at Credita; “and, with the furnished cottage and your title, I think if we say fifty pounds a-year, it will be about the mark.”

“Well, sir,” I replied, “I have but a very small private property,—scarcely anything, indeed, independent of my personal exertions; but, as it is my first essay, and you give, as you say, a title, I accept your offer with pleasure.”

“Yes,” pursued Mr. Lacey Alley, dreamily, and sipping at his glass in an abstracted manner, “I think fifty pounds per annum is not too much: paid quarterly, either at the Rectory House, or at Bagstock, Mammon and Bagstock, Cornhill, to my private account. I have had seventy-five pounds for a title before this; but we will say fifty.”

“What,” I said, “my good sir, do I understand that I am to be your debtor?—to pay you fifty pounds a-year for being your curate?”

“Precisely so.” And the reverend gentleman gave me a nod of condescension and kindness, as if to preclude any expression of gratitude, and to acquit me of all obligation. I thanked him for his hospitality, and took my leave almost at once, carpet-bag in hand; for, with the intention of sleeping in the village, I had foolishly dismissed my vehicle, and had now to walk to the station. At the corner of the rectory wall, however, I found gig and driver waiting. “All right,” he said, “I know’d you’d be back again for the next train; there ain’t one in twenty as stops.” Selling titles, indeed, was just as much a source of professional emolument to Lacey Alley as the tithes of Credita Regis; and there were but few who could afford to buy them at his valuation.

I applied to a good many more ecclesiastical advertisers, both personally and by letter, before I got a title to orders. The majority of them gave nothing whatever to their curates besides their characters; few gave more than thirty pounds—unless there was no furnished dwelling-place; and none more than sixty pounds. An offer of this last sum I at last accepted.

The vicarage of Multum in Parvo, was upon the summit of a range of downland, very wild and bleak. It was the only respectable-looking house in the hamlet; and, from

some talk I had with the peasants I chanced to meet upon the road, the ignorance of the inhabitants seemed quite stupendous. What necessity, I wondered, could there be for my having taken honours at the university, about which the vicar had been particularly solicitous? It struck me that a seventeenth wrangler and the gainer of a theological prize was about to be thrown away.

A boy in a stable dress was wheeling a barrow through the garden-gate as I drove up. He shut it rudely in my face, and caused me to wait outside for a considerable time. I could have sworn—had the canon law permitted it—that the same identical youth let me in at the front door at last; although his face had acquired the tint of beetroot, from the haste with which he had cast himself into those pepper-and-salts. I observed that the umbrella-stand in the entrance hall was also a hat-stand and a coat-stand, a home for the barometer, and a stall for the garden-spud. I saw that Mr. Shiftwell himself wore a sort of garment in which he might have played at skittles, danced the mazourka, or preached the assize sermon before the judges, without its attracting notice upon either occasion. Whether the room wherein he sat was the dining-room, or the drawing-room, or the library, no upholsterer could accurately determine. I know not whether the collation of which he pressed me to partake should be more fitly called luncheon, or dinner, or breakfast à la fourchette; and, after I had remained a year within that house, I was still in doubt whether the parlour-maid or the housemaid was the cook, or whether there was indeed no housemaid or parlour-maid, and but one poor miserable domestic, after all. Mr. Shiftwell strolled out with me after—the meal, and behaved most frankly and agreeably; exhibiting the church that was also the school-room, and the churchyard wherein a cow and a horse were feeding along with a flock of sheep, and which he assured me produced a good crop of hay at the proper time besides. To my inquiries about lodgings in the village, he replied that it was his desire that I should take up my residence with him. There was plenty of room, he said, and we should doubtless be good company to one another. In discussing ecclesiastical matters, he observed, “I cannot think how so many of my brethren can find it in their consciences to accept the gratuitous services of men of their own cloth. For my part, I never give less than one hundred pounds a-year to any priest, or than sixty pounds a-year to any deacon. I give that sum even with a title, and with what little advantages my poor house can offer likewise.” I could not help observing upon this unwonted generosity; but Mr. Shiftwell refused to listen to any encomiums. “There is no generosity in the matter, sir,” said he, “it’s a mere question of Christianity; but I hope I am not

illiberal by nature either.” Our conversation having been interrupted more than once by the boisterous laughter of some youths at play in the neighbouring meadow, he presently remarked, “I am a widower, Mr. Andrews, and these are my three boys. The eldest of them is only fifteen; but he shows an uncommon talent, and will do something, I hope, some day, at your own college. By the bye, sir, I forget whether I mentioned that I should expect you to afford my boys some of your spare time every day as an instructor; from nine to twelve, say, and from two till four.”

This was the reason why the Vicar of Multum in Parvo was so anxious about his curate having taken honours: also, perhaps, in some measure, the explanation of his seeming munificence: his plan for educating his three boys being decidedly cheaper than that of either Eton or Rugby.

Nevertheless I abode with Mr. Shiftwell for my year of bondage, and made three tolerable bricks out of an insufficient quantity of straw. After that period; and having been ordained a priest, I began to entertain hopes of bettering myself. I had a notion—common among young curates, but still, I think, not in my case without foundation—that I had an especial gift for pulpit eloquence, which seemed altogether a buried talent so long as I should remain at Multum in Parvo. An advertisement in my Vicar’s weekly paper (which combined the information of Bell’s Life, the Court Journal, and the Church and State Gazette) seemed to afford a chance of distinguishing myself in a more open field of action. At Santon, a fashionable watering-place on the east coast, a young evangelical minister, with a pleasant voice and engaging manners, was said to be in request. There was no parish work, the assistant being required for a proprietary chapel, by that popular preacher, the Reverend Speke Softly.

I was introduced to the countenance of this gentleman by every print-shop which I passed in Santon, before I enjoyed the privilege of seeing it in the flesh. Whether a temporary attack of bile or jaundice had marred those insinuating features, I cannot, at this distance of time, remember; but, with the same hyacinthine locks, the same snow-white hands, the same exquisitely accurate get-up, as represented in the engraving, he was certainly less benignant than it was, in expression. He took no pains to hide the relative positions in which he considered we two stood. His opinion of me was the same which the man who plays Hamlet may be supposed to entertain of the man who plays the cock. I was to read prayers morning and evening; but to preach only in the afternoon, when servants and children were supposed alone to form the congregation.

Mr. Speke Softly was either not ambitious of a rival, or hesitated to entrust the precious

souls of the aristocracy out of his own hands. He was much distressed at my announcing myself a poor man; but more on the church's account, he said, than on his own, or mine. "It would be well for this country, Mr. Andrews, if the ministry were exclusively supplied from the upper and wealthy classes. There is but too much truth in what is urged against tithe and church-rate, and it is a thousand pities that they cannot both be dispensed with. Mammon is the besetting sin of our order, and for my part"—he grew, at this point, exceedingly like the engraving—"it is my humble boast that I have never taken a shilling from the poor." Mr. Softly, however, omitted to add, what was equally true, that the poor never took a shilling from him. He had simply nothing to do with them; either temporarily or spiritually. With the exception of the servants and children before mentioned, no miserable sinners who had not five hundred a-year, ever entered his chapel. The themes of his discourses were upon contentment with our situations in life, obedience to authority, and respect to our superiors; which, however fitted for the dwellers in the lanes and rows of Santon, were rather superfluous to the inhabitants of its squares and crescents. What with the comforts that his well-cushioned, many-hassocked flock enjoyed in this world, and the brilliant prospect their pastor drew of their future life, they were an especially privileged and elect congregation.

My next superior was the Reverend Cruciform Pyx, Rector of St. Dunstan's, whom, if I had been more of an acrobat, I should have better pleased. It was at least six weeks before I had learnt to make his requisite genuflexions, head-inclinings, rotations and semi-rotations at the precisely correct times. We two were accustomed to proceed to church with our arms folded cross-wise over our breasts; with our eyes directed to the ground; which, to me, who didn't know the road so well, was less easy than it was to the Reverend Mr. Pyx. St. Dunstan's was immediately contiguous to a large railway-station, the superintendent of which was one of our churchwardens. He was an essentially practical, but a most obliging person; and, upon the rector's requesting his assistance in carrying out a dashing scheme of having lighted candles before the altar, he suggested, "But, as you are so near the works, why not lay on a gas-pipe at once?"

Mr. Pyx, although a narrow-minded and even superstitious person, was a gentleman, and treated his curate as such, with the exception of a rather severe homily administered on the occasion of his detecting me in company with pigeon-pie on a Friday. I experienced from him unvarying kindness. I should have remained with him perhaps up to this time, but for my having unwittingly buried a poor man in the churchyard—he

being, not alive, but what was still worse in the eyes of the Reverend Cruciform—a dissenter. My rector was away, and had left no particular orders against this unfortunate person's interment. Moreover, if I had refused to do my office I should have been suspended by the bishop; for, in these cases, what is conscience in the beneficed clergyman, is supposed to be too expensive a luxury to be enjoyed by the curate; but good Mr. Pyx would listen to nothing save his own indignant voice in quotation of St. Anathema Maranatha De Sepulturâ Hereticorum, and from St. Dunstan's I had to depart forthwith.

It would be tedious to narrate further, how I wandered from cure to cure without much permanent benefit; most penniless men in the same circumstances perceive earlier that advancement, or even moderate remuneration, in the church is not to be expected without episcopal or aristocratic connection, and are soon content to vegetate for their natural lives in the position of gentlemen with the incomes of underbutlers. Perhaps it had been better for me if I had done this. I should have then escaped many a proud man's contumely, many a proud woman's insult; for I have often met with a Mrs. Lacey Alley and even a Mrs. Pyx, who regarded a curate as an animal of a lower creation, upon whose back too much cannot be laid. My continual crosses and ill-fortune have, I am aware, soured my temper, and not better fitted me for my profession. I can, myself, detect the bitterness that threads this very statement. I shall, perhaps, seem to its readers a carping and dissipated person, who has the good of himself in view, rather than that of his order. I do not defend myself; I wish for the church's sake that I had myself and my own faults alone to thank that, after many years of ministerial labour, I am in the same position, in all respects as regards emolument and station, as when I first entered the ranks of the clergy. The circumstances of my dating this communication from the Rectory House, Grapesissour, Hants, is easily explained. I have no chance whatever of becoming at any time the rector of that place; that fortunate divine—who has the advantage of being married to an earl's daughter, and of possessing a canonry of a thousand a-year, in addition to this pleasant benefice of seven hundred—although an exceedingly courteous person, is not the sort of man to resign any of these possessions in my favour; or, if he were compelled to resign one of the three, it would be, or I am very much mistaken, her honourable ladyship. He gives me, nominally, in accordance with the command of the bishop and with the wording of his oath, one hundred pounds per annum; but I pay him fifty pounds of that back for the use of the Rectory House, and rather more than the same sum for keeping up its extensive gardens. Had I not some private

pupils there, and if I were compelled to subsist upon my stipend, I should fare but ill; for the annual balance is actually against me in the sum of three pounds three shillings and fourpence. I have, certainly, the honour of receiving occasional letters from the Reverend High and Mitey and from her Ladyship, and I am allowed the use of the kitchen-stuff; so that the loss of the three pounds three shillings and fourpence may be said to be made up to me in vegetables and condescension. Still, I do not think that it is I who deserve the title of "Bloated Churchman," which I understand is very freely applied to me by the evening company, at the Standard of Freedom, over the way.

MINERALS THAT WE EAT.

IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER THE FIRST.

THESE are times in which eating, practised as an art since the beginning of the world, has attained to the dignity of a science. The chemists of to-day, rival our cooks in their culinary operations. The savoury smell of beef fills all the continental laboratories. Essays on the chemistry of food issue from the University at Giessen, teaching the astonished graduates of the cordon bleu not to boil their meat, that they may not spoil their broth. Soyer and Francatelli have taken lessons of Liebig, Majendie, and others distinguished in science, and have raised them an ovation in an omelette. We see already some results. Young mothers have ceased to starve their children on arrowroot and sago, since they have learnt that these belong to the non-nutritive but heat-giving substances; although they constitute one half of the food we eat. Governments, too, whose culinary operations have generally ended in a pretty kettle of fish, have been induced to discontinue starving their armies upon gelatine, and which was literally giving them bones when they demanded bread; our convicts are not fattened like prize cattle, while our sailors go hungry; nor are our sailors over-nourished when off work, and badly fed when in active employment. Catching the hare, and cooking the hare are the least important parts of our modern system of gastronomies. We must know how much carbon the hare contains, and how much nitrogen; at what temperature it coagulates, and what is its standard of digestibility. Such things as these are seen in a Glasse but darkly, or not at all. But, in the chemico-culinary works of the modern masters, they blaze forth in the full light of day.

The progressive change which has been worked out in the theory and practice of dietetics involves our happiness and probable length of life. For, we may add as a corollary to the proposition, that a man must eat that he may live,—he must eat scientifically and with intelligence, if he would live well. Chemistry has played the foremost part in

this reform. It was Mulder of Amsterdam who, like a new Columbus, drew immortality from an egg, and in crushing its fragile casing, cracked the shell of obscurity. From the white of egg he extracted a nitrogenous substance which he called *Proteine* (from *proteuo*, I am the first). This he proved to lie at the base of every nutritive article of food. Liebig followed in his steps; not without vindicating his claims to greatness, by disputing the value of Mulder's discovery, and asking him a question which was repeated all over Europe, "What is *proteine*?" The discussion led to elaborate investigations of the bearing of this discovery. The results were startling. The proposition which was enunciated runs thus:—

Man, they said at first, is made up of air; and his food is air solidified. He springs from air, he lives on air; to air he shall return. The proofs are made out in this wise:—Man feeds on plants directly; or, through the mediation of herbivorous animals; plants feed on carbonic acid gas, ammonia, and water—which impregnate the atmosphere. Plants, then, feed on air; and man also, through the direct mediation of plants; or, indirectly, through that of the herbivorous animals he eats. When death overtakes him, he dissolves into ammonia, carbonic acid gas, and water; and this again returns to air. The food which he eats—compact of the elements of the air—is either nutritious or heat-giving, according to the proportion present of one or the other of the elements of the atmospheric compounds: nutritive, if nitrogenous; heat-giving, if carbonaceous; nourishing, if the elements of ammonia predominate; warming, if it contain the carbon of carbonic acid in excess.

Four elements, in one firm band,
Give form to earth, and sea, and land.

So sang Schiller, the poet of philosophy. But this poetic science—not the less exciting it is to be feared, to some of those who dabbled in it, because it ranged them in battle array face to face with the theologian,—leaves half the story untold. True it is that these four elements have been hunted down in every form of Protean change; now gaseous, now fluid, now solid; entering into endless forms of existence, and pervading every substance we examine; as we may see by tracing their harlequin round of transformations. They pass into the plant as water, and as the gases of the atmosphere. By the strange alchemy of the vegetable cell, they are converted into a thousand edible substances;* starch, sugar, gluten, cellulose, and all the other compounds which make up wheat, potatoes, greens, and grass. The herbivorous creature, rabbit or ox, incorporates them with his own flesh and blood, and prepares them for the use of the carnivorous feeder, tiger or man. So that

* See Household Words, volume viii. pages 354 and 453.

not only is all flesh grass, but grass is air. In the vital processes of the body they are again reduced to their primitive state, and pass again into the air to renew their round of fresh existence; revolving through a never-ending series of material metamorphoses. This sublime cycle of an ever-renewed life arrests and fascinates our intelligence. But we are compelled to recur—not without some doubt and trouble—to the Biblical declaration, from earth was man made, and to dust he shall return. We ask for reconciliation of human with divine truth; although we know well that the one can never contradict the other. The interpretation is often above our power; but a faithful study of structure and nutrition leads us to the solution of this problem also.

According to Quetelet, a full-grown man weighs on an average one hundred and fifty-four pounds. Subtract from this the water which lies everywhere, giving pliancy and suppleness, there remain thirty-eight pounds; of which one-fourth is constituted by earthy that is, mineral matter. If we remember that the dust of the earth is mineral, we shall see a glimmering of light. Let us track these mineral matters at once to their source:—

Man, we have said, directly or indirectly, feeds upon the vegetable kingdom. *Quod facit per alium, facit per se* [who acts by another acts for himself],—and, although it is not generally acknowledged that a man can get his eating done for him by an agent; yet we have shown that, practically, we do avail ourselves of the greater digestive powers of oxen, sheep, and herbivorous animals generally, to obtain grass in the more palatable and assimilable form of beef and mutton. What then is the food of plants? No modern discovery in chemical science promises to exercise a more immense influence over the welfare of nations than this observation of Liebig,—that plants, although feeding upon air, take, each of them from the earth, mineral substances. They will not flourish without them; they thrive only on a soil affording them that mineral aliment which they specially require. The impoverishment of fields by successive crops means only the exhaustion of the mineral components of the soil, and the whole business of the agriculturist is to restore continually to the fields, in a proper form, those minerals which his crops withdraw. It took a long time to get a reception for this doctrine; nay, is not even yet everywhere acknowledged. The farmer thought his crops fed on charcoal and mould, or humus. The man of science backed the farmer's opinion, by endeavouring to prove the absorption of humus, and by examining the qualities of humic acid and chrenic acid. Decandolle said that the refusal of the earth to yield a succession of similar crops, arose from the fact that plants expelled from their rootlets a fluid, poisonous to themselves and other individuals of their kind. This monstrous

theory, throws upon the gentlest plant the odium of distilling venomous compounds, and accuses it of poisoning for others the very fount of its own life. Such a theory is not less untrue than horrible. Liebig and his followers conclusively showed that the plant was innocent of any other process than that of continually absorbing, from the earth, those mineral products which are essential to its existence; so that, at length, it leaves the field devoid of the elements of nutrition. Fleets traverse the ocean, labourers hew at the beds of coprolite, or fossil dung, which marvellously retains its fertilising powers after countless ages; and cunning chemists compound various forms of superphosphate, that the fields may receive this needed nutriment. The full solution of the problem is not yet worked out; but its successful demonstration will restore to our exhausted lands and famished population, the agricultural riches and plenty which smile upon the virgin plains of the New World, and beckon away our lean and hungry paupers to fresh fields and pastures new.

These minerals, which are interwoven with the living structure of the plant, are taken up into the fabric of the animal. And, to us, they are as important as to the meanest vegetable that grows. I, who write this, boast myself living flesh and blood. But lime strengthens my bones; iron flows in my blood; flint bristles in my hair; sulphur and phosphorus quiver in my flesh. In this human frame the rock moves, the metal flows, and the materials of the earth, snatched by the divine power of vitality from the realms of inertia, live and move, and form part of a soul-tenanted frame. In the very secret chamber of the brain there lies a gland, gritty with earthy mineral matter, which Descartes did not scruple, with a crude scientific impiety, to assign as the residence of the soul. You could no more have lived and grown, and flourished without iron, and silica, and potash, and sodium, and magnesium, than wheat can flourish without phosphorus, grass without silica, cress without iodine, or clover without lime. We are all of us indeed of earth, earthy.

The relations between the mineral and vegetable kingdoms do not wholly resemble those which exist between mineral and animal. Among plants, we find that each class has a special predilection for some one particular metal, because it is essential to its well-being, nay, to its existence. Liebig, therefore, went so far as to divide cultivated vegetables into,—

1. Alkali plants, to which belong potatoes and beets.
2. Lime plants, which include clover and peas.
3. Siliceous plants, grasses, &c.
4. Phosphorus plants, as rye, wheat, &c.

But we cannot make out a like ground for classification among animals or men. A lobster shows, to be sure, a marked affection for carbonate of lime; because he needs it to

build his shell : probably he could manage as well with a phosphate or some other form ; and, although we can speak of the earth-eating Otomacs, and clay-eating negroes, we recognise in them only morbid and unnatural feeders. We cannot, for example, so symbolise natural characteristics as to show a special fondness of the Germans for food abounding in lead ; of the French for viands rich in quicksilver ; or of the Americans of a diet particularly calculated to produce the "almighty dollar." We can only affirm generally, that we are all more or less men of metal ; that in all our food we imbibe mineral matter ; and that our frame is loaded with earth.

The minerals that we eat should be regarded from a double point of view ; they should be subdivided into those which are necessary ingredients of the food, and invariable elements of the body ; and those which, not being strictly necessary, are occasionally or even frequently found in the analysis of the organic structure. We might add the names of many minerals used in medicines voluntarily and of our own knowledge ; or in food involuntarily, and by way of adulteration. Their name is legion. There would yet remain the enumeration of minerals which have been used by fashionable ladies, as beauty draughts (such as antimony among the ladies of Paris at the present day), or by others in lower grade for like purpose, and the list would include arsenic. For, strange as it may appear to thinking sober men, most of the drugs which have been employed for these light and frivolous ends have been of poisonous nature ; as if the fair sex loved, from the nettle Danger, to pluck the flower Beauty. Here we should see that, at one time or other, mankind consumed as edible or potable matters, nearly all the minerals of which the dust of the earth is made up. But strike out all chance ingredients, disregard that share of earth which fashion, fraud, or physis forces down our throats, there yet remain, as inevitable elements of our food, and of our frames, phosphorus, sulphur, iron, sodium, (the base of soda and of salt) ; potassium, (base of potash) ; silicon, (base of flint) ; calcium, (the base of lime) ; magnesium, (the base of magnesia). There is a great deal to digest in that list.

If it be a novel, it is also a startling reflection that, ingredients so combustible as phosphorus and sulphur form ever-present constituents of the human frame. But no other of the inorganic substances included in our list possesses so wide a range of organic being as these highly inflammable materials. They appear to be essential to the constitution of every fibre of muscle, of every globule of blood, of every cell of the brain and nerve tissues. They are organised in our flesh, and they circulate in our arteries ; they are consumed in the changes which accompany the process of thought.

What is the ordained purpose of their presence ? Physiology mutters an imperfect answer. We catch a glimpse of a relation to the principal processes of growth in the large and varying proportion found in the earliest forms and stages of life. In the egg, proverbially so full of meat and mystery, there is a large proportion of phosphorus ; which appears, according to the experiments of a celebrated physiologist, unaccountably to increase, as the Promethean spark of life begins to glow with a steadier and more fervent heat. The incorporation of phosphorus with the nerve-tissues affords a hint in a new direction. There is no question that mental exertion is accompanied by proportionate waste of the substance of the brain, the instrument and engine of thought ; just as every other exertion of force is accompanied by chemical transmutation of matter. With this goes, hand in hand, the consumption of phosphorus ; which is an incorporate part of the brain. The fiery ragings of the madman, and the deep meditations of the scholar, are accompanied, as Dr. Bence Jones has shown, by a greater waste of the phosphates than the expenditure of them that goes on in ordinary or more placid beings. The reflection is strange and whimsical, that the most luminous coruscations of thought have their source in a brain rich in phosphorised fats ; and that the thoughts that breathe and words that burn, have been really cradled from their birth in dormant fire.

Or all the minerals that we eat, none can claim so high a place in science, history, and literature, as common salt. The only mineral which we habitually consume in its raw state : which is universally found in our food and in our frame : which is eagerly consumed by all nations, and in all ages : enthusiastically lauded ; blindly assailed : which is a preservative of health, yet perhaps not unproductive of disease : held sacred in every religion : potent over life before man existed : as potent, and more honoured, since man was created.

It was in those petrified leaves which now display, in stony characters, the recorded history of earliest geologic ages, that the first lines of the Biography of Salt were written. For, many thousand years before man was created, the toleration of salt was the tenure by which plants and animals held their existence. The earth was covered with salt waters, and the air was impregnated with salt vapours. The endurance of salt was the law and condition of the existence of every living thing. Plants and animals, strange forms and monstrous, all had to swallow their dose of salt. A ridiculous image presents itself to our mind of a squeamish plesiosaurus, or a fastidious dinotherium pulling a long face over the nauseous mouthful. But there was no help ; they must thrive on it, or perish by it : it was their daily food. And,

when Nature was partly freed from this thralldom: when the seas subsided, and the face of the dry land appeared, and man and salt were simultaneously deposited on it, salt lost none of its importance. It was not only that salt still swayed the seas, and that the teeming vegetation and crowded life of those mighty waters were modified by salt as they are now—so subject to its influence, that they must have salt daily and hourly or they die; but man began to seek for the salt deposited on the earth. In the earliest divine record of man's history, salt plays a foremost part. Read, for instance, that sacred ordinance which commands the addition of salt to every offering and oblation. A Talmudic fantasy of the Hebrew commentator Rabbi Shelomo exists, which may be transformed into a graceful fable. When, at the creation, the waters below, now called the seas, he gravely narrates, were banished to this gloomy earth, they repined at the happiness of those celestial waters which were spread out above the firmament, destined to flow through eternal fields of amaranth, in rhythm with the choiring of angelic voices, and privileged to waft seraphic harmony to the foot of the throne of glory. In grace, it was promised to them, that they should be perpetually employed in God's service, and offered in all offerings and sacrifices. Hence the Mosaic ordinance. It may be that, in the sad moans of the restless waves, we hear their lament for earthly exile; but who doubts that they, in common with all Creation, are continually performing God's work, and in this are made happy? Often again salt appears in the Sacred Volume as the emblem of eternity; of repentance; of reconciliation, and of wisdom. Numa among the Etruscans, Pythagoras among the Greeks, repeated the precept of Moses. "Do not speak of Deity without fire; nor sacrifice without salt." Pythagoras calls it "a substance dear to the gods;" Homer calls it "divine;" and Plutarch says "divine indeed; because it symbolises the soul, which is of divine nature, and preserves the body from dissolution whilst it there resides, as salt preserves flesh from putrefaction." Salt has always been, and is now amongst the Arabs, the emblem of hospitality. It figures largely in eastern story. A thief, for instance, entering an Arab tent by night, when the master is asleep, seizes some food and becomes aware of the flavour of salt; bound involuntarily by the laws of hospitality, he withdraws without carrying out his felonious intention. In the story of the Forty Thieves, the chief robber who enters the house of Morgiana's master on a false pretence, is enjoined to make such excuses, whenever his host offers him salt, as will enable him to refuse partaking of it without suspicion.

In our time not only is salt mixed with all our food:

For cooks would deem't a grievous fault
Were viands eaten without salt.

but the salt-cellar has become a never-failing appendage to our table. In England the amount of salt consumed gives twenty pounds per annum to each individual: in France the average ranges at about fifteen pounds; but, in some countries, the love of salt amounts to a passion. In Abyssinia, every man carries a lump of salt; and, when he meets a friend, he gives it to him to lick: his friend returning the compliment with all the grace of which an Abyssinian dandy, butter-anointed to his head, is capable. The little children beg for it as for sugar. In India, when the gabelle, or salt-tax, made it penal for the natives to go down on their knees and lick the salt stones, the enactment produced insurrection. In France the salt duties were so often violated, that in, one year, four thousand persons were thrown into prison for the offence. Yet the sea is full of salt, and the sea is made for all. Animals love salt not less than man. Cows in pasture lick it up with avidity, so also horses and most other animals. The salt-licks of America bear the name of Big-bone Licks; for here are found great heaps of bones; relics of the Pre-Adamite inhabitants of Earth; uncouth monsters who came floundering down in search of salt, and sank there impacted in the mud, never to rise again.

We may question those learned in the mysteries of the animal and human frame, if we would learn the secret of this strange yearning after salt which ages have not diminished, nor civilisation annihilated. Salt occurs in every part of the human body. It is organised in the solids, and dissolved in the fluids; it creeps into every corner of the frame, and plays a part in all the complicated processes of life, without which the machinery would be arrested in its operation. Thus, all our nutritive food consists either of fibrin, albumen, or casein; and neither of these could be assimilated, and used in building up the flesh that walls about our life, unless salt were present: neither being soluble except in a saline fluid. Salt constitutes a fifth part of the ash of muscle, and a tenth part of the ash of cartilage: it supplies the acid of the gastric juice; it so essentially helps assimilation, that its absence would create a difficulty in getting rid of the effete materials of the frame. The relative amount of salt in the body is incapable of great alteration; for there appears to be a special sense which provides for the necessary dilution of salt with water. This is the sense of thirst, which wakes up within us when we have thrown too much salt into the circulation, and plagues and torments us; calling for water—more water!

Suppose, then, salt to be cut off from the food of man or animal. Would they suffer? There are not wanting doctors, both in physis and philosophy, who maintain that, without salt, we could no more live than without bread: and the learned have not failed to note that malach, the Hebrew expression

for salt is an anagram of lacham—bread. Indeed, salt pervades all organic structures so intimately, that it is not possible to exclude it from our diet. But salt has been disused as far as possible by some inland tribes. Homer, who interested himself in this investigation, notes that the Epeirots ate no salt; the Bathurst tribe of savages are almost the only other known instances of like want of taste. There exist, however, in society some few human anomalies who abstain from salt to a certain extent; and gloomy enough their gastronomic souls must be; for, salt is, in the material world, what the affections are in the moral world—a zest and relish, without which life would be tasteless and insipid. The deprivation of salt was a punishment among the Persians, Dutch, and Russians. The prisoner condemned to it suffered from fevers, and diseases of a low type. They fell victims to parasites. Dr. Leitch lately observed some of the diseases engendered by a diet devoid of salt among the State prisoners of Russia.

Elder writers are enthusiastic in praise of salt. "Common salt," says Schroeder, "is affirmed by the Monk Basilus, to be the most delicious of all condiments, and the most wholesome. It warms, dries, cleanses, dissolves, astringes, destroys the superfluities, penetrates, digests, resists poisons and putrefactions." "An ancient Physician" told that excellent philosopher, Mr. Boyle, that besides his ardent prayers to God, and a very regular diet, his constant antidote against the plague was only to take every morning a little sea-salt in a few teaspoonfuls of fair water, which kept his blood soluble without weakening him. More modern physicians have put faith in salt and brandy as an antidote against that plague of our later days—cholera. Salt-water frictions daily advance into greater vogue: as Mr. Meinig with "Daphne Sal Marinum," will testify. We know, too, how great is the efficacy of salt-water and sea-breezes in repairing the ravages of a London season upon the charms of rustic Phillis, or restoring the shattered health of poor worn out valetudinarian Lothario.

The inmates of Margate Infirmary can tell a yet happier tale of the beneficence of these salt-breezes. They can tell of lingering diseases fortunately ended; of long convalescence speedily consummated by cure. Many the life which seemed gradually ebbing away in the atmosphere of a London hospital, that these briny vapours have called back and fortified, and cheered with long years of health. Salt plays here the part of a good fairy; it makes of this infirmary a sort of healing heaven for the bodily sick. The London hospitals afford a refuge to a maimed or diseased being who has made no progress towards health, while he had been doomed to remain in his own home, in the thick stagnant atmosphere of a room, crowded perhaps by three generations, and to

wear out a wretched life amidst dirt and disease. Airy wards, good diet, skilful and tender treatment, fan the flickering spark into a feeble flame; but still he lies there pale, sallow, with thin lips and sunken eyes; And as month after month rolls on, the rapid hours that found him so weak and worn, leave no healing trace upon his thin brow. But a vacancy occurs at the Margate Sea-bathing Infirmary, and he is transported to the atmosphere which the salt breezes have purified and blessed with healing power. Little other medicine does he need than the fresh breeze and the pleasant vapour of the sea: than baths and invigorating exercise. By these, the poor victim who lay so long upon the altar of Death—who seemed for months to be within his very clutches—is rescued. Death dallied with him; and, seeing him weak and powerless, delayed to slay this miserable captive, while so many that were young and fair, and eager to escape, awaited the stroke of his sweeping scythe. But he loses his victim by the virtues of salt. It is when I contemplate salt from this stand-point, that it seems to me to be no unfit subject for all the extravagant laudations which mystics and philosophers have lavished upon it. I, too, am ready to call it divine and blessed, a fifth element, the most precious gift of Heaven.

The Pythagoreans held the sea to be a separate element, in addition to fire, air, and water, on account of the salt which it contains. Euripides poetically designates the ocean as the salt tears of Saturn. The sea is still the chief source of the salt which we use. There are one hundred and forty-five millions of square miles of sea; each gallon of its water containing forty per cent. of salt. The whole mass therefore amounts to six thousand four hundred and forty-one billions of tons; so that, if the sea were evaporated and the salt crystallised, the latter would form a layer seven hundred feet thick over the bottom of the sea, or two thousand feet thick over the solid land of the earth. But we draw largely for our salt upon the masses deposited upon the earth in early ages. These occupy various positions. In one place salt is buried in cavernous mines, which its beauty glorifies; in another, it covers the surface of the land with a silvery efflorescence. The largest and most celebrated salt-mine—that of Wieliczka, in Galicia, possesses a bed of salt extending four hundred and sixty miles, and has a thickness of one thousand two hundred feet. Salt here too retains its sacred relations. Cunigunda—pious princess—drew down the knowledge of the locality of this mine by her prayers. A ring which she threw into a salt spring in Hungary was found in these mines. The miracle attested her claim to their discovery. The accounts of the salt plains of Abyssinia are shrouded

in mystery. The heat there, is so great, that by day no mortal can endure it. During those hours the merchants hide themselves beneath sheltering rocks; when the moon rises and they come forth from the crevices, the whole plain lies before them white with salt, glistening like silver in the pale moonbeams. They fill their sacks, but not without danger; for, says tradition, in the fissures and cavities of the rocks lurk demons, who entice travellers to their destruction, calling them by name, and feigning to be old acquaintances. The sacred thirst for gold urges them on; and trembling, they traverse the plain, guided by pillars of salt, spectral sign-posts, standing like tall white ghosts, left mourning in the Wilderness, like the wife of Lot. Salt-springs such as we have at Droitwich and Nantwich afford capital table-salt. Those of Sicily are celebrated; their origin is stated thus:—In eleven hundred and sixty-nine an earthquake rent the ground destroying fifteen thousand commoners and a bishop. Towns and castles were shaken to pieces; and, at Syracuse, a fountain lost its sweetness, and became salt. It would appear that the bishop was translated to another sea, and, let us hope that he was benefited by translation.

This salt, so widely spread over earth and sea, pervades also the whole animal and vegetable creation; "and indeed," says the illustrious Zohar, "since the Great God makes nothing in vain, surely salt must serve some great use." But, if sages and physicians have glorified it as a panacea, a modern knight-errant has assailed it as a poison. Having heard the blast of their wide-mouthed trumpets, we may be diverted by the squeak of his shrill whistle. Salt, according to the late Dr. Howard, is the source of all our misery and all our woes. The salt-box is that vase of Pandora, from which sprang the cohorts of sin and disease. When man was placed in Paradise, it was ordained, say the anti-salt philosophers, that he should feed on earth; yet only through the medium of the vegetable creation. It was the primal sin of Adam that he ate raw salt, passing over the plant through whose intermediation the earth converts its own substance into a state fitted for the nourishment of animated beings. Salt was the forbidden fruit: it cost man the loss of Paradise: since then it has been his earthly curse. "The operation of this crude mineral substance, which has not been softened and rendered mild by passing through the vegetable state, is most certainly fatal to the combustion of the vital flame." A fertile source of disease, it is said, by these authorities, to be denounced in hidden terms in the Bible. Eating swine-flesh and abomination so positively forbidden in Isaiah, is swine-flesh. It was against pickled pork that he directed his denunciation; and interpretation of the learned doctors, prove the whole nation of Hebrews that

they may eat freely of pork—roasted, boiled, or fried—so that they abstain from bacon and ham.

No absurdity is so monstrous, but that some throats have capacity to swallow it. Even Dr. Howard had his followers. How Pliny, and Plato, and Blaise de Vigueures, would have held up hands of horror and affright at this unholy heresy! The whole experience of ages, and collective wisdom of nations stand opposed to the mad denunciation. So far is salt from being useless, that man and animals have from the earliest times sought it with incredible pains and devoured it with marvellous avidity. Its use has been held to be a privilege essential to pleasure and to health: its deprivation a punishment productive of pain and disease. Its uses in the economy are manifold and important. Without it there would be no assimilation of food, no formation of gastric juice. Nutrition would cease: life would languish, and utterly waste. Salt, moreover, would appear to ward off low forms of fever. It deals death to parasitic growth. So far is it from being unholy, that, since the birth of revealed religion, its history has been bound up with the history of ceremonial rites, and as Elisha healed with it the waters of Jericho, so it found a place in the modern rite of baptism. Sole, saith the proverb, et sale nihil sanctius et utilius: Nothing is more holy, or more useful than the sun and salt.

BILLETED IN BOULOGNE.

ONE clear brisk autumn day, Nurse, petty tyrant of my host's little establishment at Boulogne, entered the dining-room, exclaiming:

"There are no less than four dirty French soldiers, sir, in the court below. They say they have billets on this house."

"This is serious," our host cried. "I must go and see what I can do with them."

We followed, and there certainly stood four travel-stained invaders, soldiers of the line, with slaty bluish-grey overcoats and loose red trousers thrust into their white gaiters, with hairy knapsacks and guns. They seemed to be very tired, poor fellows, and, notwithstanding their moustaches and peaked beards, by no means formidable. The youngest, bearing a corporal's stripes, was already in conversation with our host. His voice was soft, his accent refined, and the bow with which he concluded his reply would not have disgraced St. James's or any other lawful region of Ko-too.

"Well," said the master of the house, "I will take a few minutes to think of it—either to receive you, or pay for your quarters at an estaminet. Meanwhile come in. Madeleine, some wine and refreshments for Messieurs les militaires!"

The offer was accepted with many courteously expressed acknowledgments, and to the

infinite delight of little Harry, the youngest of the juveniles, and to the infinite disgust of Nurse, the four soldiers were introduced into the kitchen.

"But," I said to my friend, "you do not mean to hesitate about sending these men to an inn? They surely would be a great nuisance in the house."

"I am not so sure of that; and I am quite sure it would cost me less to supply them here than to pay for their living elsewhere. They are very well conducted fellows, the French soldiers."

Chorus of juveniles: "Oh! yes, papa! do keep them here."

"Well, sir, I suppose you know best," said Nurse; "but I do say I never heard the like of it in all my days. Four dirty soldiers walking in and sitting down in any gentleman's house, as if the place was their own! And where am I to put them, sir? There is but one spare room."

"Oh, don't trouble yourself about that! They will not require separate apartments. Get them some mattresses and blankets in the loft, or some straw," her master replied, laughing. "But wait a moment, I must speak to them again."

In short, despite Nurse's objections, the men were settled in their quarters, expressed themselves charmed with the cockloft, delighted with the wine, and penetrated with the hospitality of Monsieur.

I must confess that I was much disposed to share Nurse's objections, and inquired, with some anxiety, how long the visitation was to last.

"That is hard to tell," our hostess said, "four or five days, or perhaps a week,—until the regiment they come to replace in the camp here has moved off."

The rest of the day was tranquil. We sometimes encountered Nurse looking severe and much enduring. The subdued accent in which the children all addressed her, showed that when she was in that frame she gave others something to endure. The other members of the household were, however, by no means depressed. Indeed, we never heard merrier laughter from the kitchen.

The men were absent for a couple of hours towards evening, and retired to the loft early. We heard nothing of them.

This tranquillity, however, was not to continue; for we were aroused at some small hour in the morning by the bugle-call; then by the tramp of heavy shoes which came down-stairs with men in them, then by the sound of bolts and bars withdrawn, and then again all silent.

When we were going to our own breakfast, our military guests—returned long since from muster or parade—had finished theirs, and were busy cleaning their arms and accoutrements in the court-yard. The young corporal was seated by the fountain, apparently drawing pictures for little Harry's

amusement, as that young gentleman fondled against his knee, in evident delight.

"You have great skill," I said to the draughtsman, who had just finished a clever sketch of one of his comrades who stood opposite, tracing him with chalk, on paper filched by Master Harry from his sister's drawing-book.

"Sir, I have had practice, and it is an art I love," the young soldier replied, rising to salute me. "It is very useful to a soldier."

"A man of your acquirements ought not to be in the ranks."

An expressive shrug. "The corporal's stripes will not tarnish my epaulette whenever I get one," he said, smiling and slightly colouring. "And now, my young gentleman, stand still while I draw your picture."

I looked at the draughtsman more attentively. He was tall, slight, and, in spite of the coarse, dull uniform, graceful. He had large full dark eyes, softer than the French eyes usually are; a clear brown complexion, through which the full colour of youth showed readily on any slight emotion. He had also a delicate mouth, which his short, dark moustache was not yet large enough to hide. All indicated higher race than was suggested by the hard features and ruder gestures of his comrades. The hand, too, that used the pencil, though somewhat embrowned, was fine in form and texture, and upon the little finger was a signet-ring.

I was summoned from this little colloquy to breakfast, and, when I returned, the corporal was nowhere to be seen. One soldier was sweeping the court, another had just come in with two heavily-filled pails of water from the public fountain (Madeleine's usual task), while the third was putting up a swing for the children in the coach-house.

Nurse observed these things with a doubtful air. Her suspicions were inclined to doze; but obstinacy kept them wakeful. The men evidently were treating her with a profound respect, as if aware that they had not found favour in her eyes.

"They are not so bad after all, Nurse," said her mistress, who was looking on complacently at the delight of her children with their new playfellows.

"There's no denying, ma'am, they have behaved respectably so far. All I say is, I hope it may last, I hope it may last." And, with an ominous shake of the head, Nurse disappeared.

"Hélas!" exclaimed the soldier, who had just set down the pails, "Madame is not content. How have we had the misfortune to displease her?"

Evening had set in, and we were assembled in the drawing-room, when Nurse entered with a tragic though triumphant air.

"I beg to say, sir, that if you don't put a stop to the goings-on in the kitchen at this moment, I'll—"(a tremendous pause) "I'll not answer for the consequences."

"Why what is the matter, Nurse?"

"There's one of those soldiers, ma'am, playing the fiddle, and another, they call Pierre, had the audacity to put his arm about my waist. And they have been and pushed the kitchen-table on one side, and put the chairs all in a heap, to polka, Louise says. But they shall not insult a respectable woman of my time of life, sir, I can tell them! I've had no good of those girls ever since they came into the house, sir!"

We all jumped up and hurried to the kitchen. There was a tolerable space cleared for action, by the piling up of chairs and tables on one side. In a corner stood the violinist, his face puckered into an expression of complete enjoyment, while the offending Pierre, and his companion, were whirling the two French servant girls round in a rapid waltz, and the English children's maid was looking on, with somewhat of an envious glance. A happier party, I have seldom seen. Far from being dismayed by our appearance, the dancers merely paused to welcome us, evidently expecting we would join in the amusement.

"The corporal would be here immediately, and then Mademoiselle (the nurse-maid), would have a partner, also."

"But," said the host to Madeleine, "What is this that I hear Nurse complain of. She says Pierre insulted her?"

"O, sir, quite different. He speaks no English, and he wished to pay Madame the compliment of asking her to begin the waltz."

In vain this was explained to Nurse. "No! she was not to be palavered in that way." So her master out of patience with her told her she was a ridiculous old woman.

The dancing went on with great spirit, for the musician, Albert Caillet, was a proficient. The children were allowed to join, and all went merrily. At last Harry crept up to me slipping his hand into mine.

"The poor little corporal," he said.

"What is the matter with him?"

"He is writing in the cold loft on a trunk, with such a little candle. It is to his mother. Do ask papa to let me take him down into the school-room, which is nice and warm."

"Certainly, you may," said papa, and Harry vanished.

When I thought the corporal had had time to complete his letters I strolled into the school-room, bent on gratifying my curiosity. He was still bent over the paper. I could not help noticing the contour of his head, which in spite of the disfiguring military crop was clearly that of a gentleman.

He looked up as I entered. "Pardon me," I said, "for interrupting you—"

"Not interrupting. I have finished. I have to thank you for your courtesy in suffering me to write here. It is what you call comfortable."

"Nay, I am but a guest here like yourself.

But you write while your comrades are dancing, and a partner waits for you."

"Ah! the pretty little lady's maid," said he, folding his letter. "I had nearly forgotten her. A piece of unpardonable neglect."

There was such an indescribable air of superiority in his tone and manner, that I involuntarily exclaimed:

"Surely you must be of a far different class to your companions!"

"Ah! yes," he replied, with a smile and a sigh. "I am the first of the Fontares, who ever came into the army in so humble a grade. Nevertheless there is no use in lamenting. I was drawn in the conscription. My mother had not the means of purchasing a substitute, my sister wept, I whispered to myself 'Courage!' and here I am."

"But what a terrible thing it must be for an educated gentleman to be obliged to associate with common soldiers."

"Nay, my comrades are good fellows, a little off-hand it is true, but under the gentleman there is a man, which finds its like in other men. I am already a corporal, my education and my conduct shall soon give me another step. An epaulette is not far off, and should this war continue, we shall be sent to the Crimea in our turn, and then, and then—" he continued gazing on vacancy, and with his hand grasping the air; "a marshal's bâton is not wholly out of reach, nor is the repose of a soldier's honoured grave, contemptible. Then, sir, our colonel and two of our captains are great friends of mine, but I do not like to part myself too much from my own proper comrades. No, I am far from regretting the conscription. A French soldier, if he has education, may aim at and hope for, anything."

"Well, well, your spirit is admirable; but, while here, it must be unpleasant for you to be placed with the common soldiers. I will mention your name and position to my friends, and your stay shall be more agreeable."

"A thousand thanks, but I could not consent to accept higher consideration than may be accorded to my comrades. It would never do. They would be grieved and offended, and I should be but a poor wretch to elude my position. No, no, let us be as we are, saving that I have another pleasant reminiscence in your kind consideration. I must now go and make my peace with the pretty lady's maid; a dance with her will not unfit me to open a ball at the Tuileries with a princess—when I am a marshal."

Our military guests remained with us four days, during which time Nurse's fever constantly abated. She remained, however, almost to the last, on the alert, to detect any undue amount of flirtation between the damsels under her command and the youths of the camp; making sudden, unexpected inroads on the kitchen, after having been at some pains to impress its occupants with the idea that she was about to pass the next few hours

in her own apartment making up her accounts, or darning stockings. Finally, however, the good humour, obliging industry, and politeness of the soldiers, altogether cured her, and Pierre completed her recovery by his ingenious mending of her work-box.

They were always ready to carry the water-pails for the pretty Madeleine, to sweep the court, or to do any kind things for help or for the pleasure of the children. One of them with the fine name of Alphonse—an active, snub-nosed, red-moustached, dirty-faced little fellow, whom the Guards would have repudiated, turned out to be a famous cook, and taught Susette how to compose many delicious messes.

We were all positively grieved to part with our invaders, and especially missed, of an evening, Albert and his violin. The house seemed to be deserted; little Harry wept, and even Nurse admitted that "they were not so bad after all."

On their part the men expressed themselves infinitely delighted with the treatment they had received.

"Good bye madame, messieurs, and mademoiselles," exclaimed the corporal. "It is well for France, that her soldiers do not often find such charming quarters. They would soon be unfitted for the roughness of their service."

"Good bye," chorussed the others in a sort of trio wherein gratitude, pleasure, English hospitality, were frequently recurring words. And with many an invitation to come and see the Camp, the four men shouldered their rifles, and trudged down the street, the corporal turning at the corner, for the last time, to raise his cap.

We were beginning to lose our more vivid recollection of the billet, when one day, returning from a long walk in the country, we noticed a soldier bending under some heavy ungainly burden, which he carried with a little difficulty.

He paused at the porte-cochère of our friend's house; and, when we came up to him, lo! it was our friend Alphonse: nothing the cleaner, we must admit, for his sojourn at the Camp.

He was overjoyed at seeing us again, and with a great many salutations, produced a small note from the corporal. I shall not attempt to translate its elegantly turned phrases of compliment. Its purport was to request madame's (our host's wife,) acceptance of a flower-stand, the joint work of himself and his companions. It was most ingeniously and gracefully constructed of unbarked wood and pine cones, with a quaint border of twisted and plaited roots. It was about three feet high, and filled with moss, into which flower-pots might be imbedded.

It was quite the pride of the lobby, and the whole young family collected round Alphonse while he partook of some refreshment, with loud shouts of admiration.

We were, to use their own expression, "penetrated," with the trouble these poor fellows had taken. Their kindly spirit touched us and the entente cordiale was perfect between us and them.

THE DOMESTIC MERCURY.

THIS Domestic Mercury is not a little footnote of to-day, but yesterday's newspaper, counting one hundred and seventy-seven years as but a day, and that number of years ago as yesterday. This Mercury is a small sheet or half sheet of paper, not at all fair in complexion, upon which matter is printed in a clear, distinct type, evidently of the newest fashion, as intended for the eyes of the nobility and gentry. Putting away to-day's Times, I take up yesterday's Mercury—the first number of that journal written as it appears to suit the taste of the public, in the time of his sacred Majesty King Charles the Second; for its date is the nineteenth of December, sixteen hundred and seventy-nine. According to the fashion of that day, it has a double title, rather a large one for a newspaper, that looks like a leaf torn out of the Penny Cyclopædia. It stands thus:

"Mercurius Domesticus; or, Neues both from City and Country. Published to prevent false Reports."

Prevention is better than cure; but if this benevolent object could be accomplished within the four columns of my Mercury (supposing them to be entirely devoted thereto, which they are not), then, indeed, false reports have grown mightily upon us since the year of grace just mentioned, and the days in which we now live really are degenerate.

The first false report concerns a lady now really deceased—Nell Gwyn. She was not dead then, it seems.

"Several false and ridiculous Reports being spread abroad concerning Madam Ellin Gwyn, as to her death, or absence from her house, we are assured that there is no ground for such a Report, the said Madam Ellin Gwyn being now at her own house in health, and has not been absent from it."

Her own house is doubtless the one she had in Pall Mall, and which she occupied until her death, twelve years after the publication of this Mercury.

This being off his mind, the editor goes on to certify the public as to the true movements of a Mr. Baldrun and a Mr. Mowbray. They returned last night from Yorkshire, where they have been attending some proceedings regarding the Popish Plot—or, as we count it, the night before last—Titus Oates and no Popery were carrying the day.

"There has been much discourse, that Sir William Waller, Justice Warcup, and others of His Majesties Justices of the Peace in the City of Westminster and County of Middlesex, were turned out of the Commission of

the Peace, but it evidently appears to be so far from truth, that on the contrary we are certainly informed, that the said Justices (in pursuance of his Majesties strict charge in Council the eleventh instant) lately met together to consult of such expedients as may be most effectual for the putting in execution his Majesties late Proclamation, commanding all Papists to depart from the Cities of London and Westminster, &c."

We are evidently in confusion on the subject of the Popish Plot; for, immediately after the above correction, comes a paragraph to the effect that some young scholars of a Latin school in Cannon Street, performed the night before last, being Wednesday, a play with the following title: *The History of Pope Joan, or a Discovery of the Debaucheries and Villanies of the Popish faction.* *Holofernes*, doubtless, was the author of the play; a teacher of youth "good at such eruptions," able to present every boy-actor as *Hercules* in minority, whose enter and exit shall be strangling a snake. Bravely the young scholars aforesaid did, no doubt, set forth the abominations of privy conspiracy and rebellion, and we may feel in our own hands, if we can, the warmth of applause which we are told "entertained it" (the play) from the lips of several hundred spectators. The play we are to know was entertained, though we are not told whether it gave entertainment.

The next paragraph is succinct enough.

"The last Gazette tells us nothing from Edinburgh, so that you will not wonder that we have nothing from thence."

Certainly we cannot be surprised at getting nothing out of nothing; and there is no news for the Mercury where the Gazette is mute. Yet may there have been in Scotland wars or rumours of wars, killed and wounded, movements of troops, new raids against the disaffected Covenanters, gossip abroad about the doings of his good-looking and good-tempered, but scarcely respectable Grace of Monmouth. No news, seems to us an odd newspaper saying of a land in which Bothwell Brig was quite a recent topic, and which was then a hotbed of rebellious zeal for religion.

One peculiarity about this yesterday's Mercurius is, that like the sandwich of an economist, it is composed of two thick hunches of Popish Plot enclosing one very thin slice of more diverting information. Indeed the general tenor of the publication would seem to refer the three suns seen at Richmond by several credible people, and the illness of the Earl of Shaftesbury, to the same all-corrupting influence. To these interesting facts two small paragraphs are dedicated, and the joys of all good Protestants on his lordship's recovery is most particularly mentioned.

Faithful to his professions as set forth in the heading, Mercurius next proceeds to contradict a rumour concerning the death of the "Duchess of Cleveland," "she not having been indisposed of late." Popish Plot fills the

mouth for the fifth time in the shape of some judicial information about "Mrs. Celier the Popish Midwife, now a prisoner in Newgate;" who, having been brought before the Council would confess nothing; but Justice Warcup (the same mentioned above as not having been turned out of the Commission of the Peace) having exhibited certain depositions taken against her before him, she confessed—what, is not told us—except that what she said greatly confirmed the statements of Mr. Thomas Dangerfield.

Here again, left in darkness, we reflect with considerable satisfaction on the reports in to-day's paper, which although calculated sometimes to produce a mental state of indigestion, are very preferable to such starvation in the matter of intelligence as these succinct statements imply. The comment of to-day's free press upon the statements of Oates, Dangerfield and Company, would have been very useful.

The next piece of information is so extraordinary that we give it entire.

"It is reported that a Quaker fell in love with a lady of very great quality, and hath extraordinarily petitioned to obtain her for his wife."

This affinity of drab for lace must have been a public story, or Mercurius would not allude to it so discreetly. Could the lady of very great quality have been the Duchess of Portsmouth herself, or the fair Castlemaine, who charmed poor Mr. Pepys out of his propriety? And the Quaker, who was he; and of whom did he beg the lady for his wife?

The next article introduces us to a man of to-day as well as yesterday—a person who is not yet dead. It appears that upon the eighteenth instant, in the evening, Mr. John Dryden was set upon in Rose Street, Covent Garden, by three persons, who after calling him a variety of names (set down with great distinctness in the paper), "knocked him down and dangerously wounded him; but upon his crying out, murder! they made their escape. It is conceived that they had their pay beforehand, and designed, not to rob him, but to execute on him some Feminine, if not Popish vengeance." The reader as a friend of Dryden pretty well informed concerning his affairs, may chance to know that the above assault was perpetrated by the agents of the Earl of Rochester, and the amiable Duchess of Portsmouth, both of whom he had attacked in a manuscript poem, called the *Essay on Satire*.

The next piece is a story of more vulgar crime.

"On Tuesday night last there were four men came to the house of one William Charles, at the Crown, in Tatnam Court, near Maribone; and after their drinking about four hours, they call'd for a bottle of wine, and swore they would have the master of the house come in, or else they would not

drink it. The man of the house was unwilling; but, by their importunate desire, he went; and so soon as he came, they fell upon him, telling him they were satisfied he had much money, which they would have before they went. So, binding all the family, they rifled the house, and took away with them, in linen and silk, to the value of three-score pound."

What follows fills the mouth again with crumbs of Popish plot.

"We have an account that a person of quality lately received a packet from Flanders, by the post, from an unknown person, with a blank cover, and two books enclosed therein, the contents whereof were very scandalous and treasonable, vindicating the innocence of the five Jesuites that were lately executed, to the dishonour of his Majesties government, and the justice of the nation, who are fully satisfied of their guilt; and they particularly inveighed against the king's evidence, especially Dr. Oates and Mr. Bedlow."

The two next paragraphs are devoted, the one to the "Duchess" of Portsmouth, the other to the Duke of Monmouth. His scape-Grace is evidently under a cloud, and has just had the post of Master of the Horse (the last he held) taken from him; "but we know not who shall succeed him; and the Earl of Feversham is made Master of the Horse to the Queen." The Duke of Monmouth's case appeared to have reminded Mercurius of this circumstance, which is thrown in "permiscus."

The Duchess of Portsmouth's popish servants, we learn also, are all discharged, "in pursuance of his Majesties strict order for the removal of papists." The fair Louise troubled his sacred Majesty with more than a little of her mind, with which nothing but the pressure of the Popish Plot, or the conviction he expressed that one day he should be accused of participating in it himself, could have urged him into perilous collision.

Mercury gives all the rest of his paper to advertisements. They are nine in number, and all printed in Italics, except that first one, wherein John Dryden offers fifty pounds for the discovery of the ruffians by whom he was assaulted, "which is deposited in the hands of Mr. Blanchard, goldsmith, next door to Temple Bar. And if the discoverer be himself one of the actors, he shall have the fifty pounds without letting his name be known, or receiving the least trouble by any persecution." Dryden kept his money; for, the actors' names never were discovered.

Then, between Dryden's mishap and another of a similar nature, we find a hue and cry for a small white and fallow greyhound: the description given rivalling, in accuracy and style, some well-known Irish advertisements; and a nautical idea being raised, towards the middle of the paragraph, by the statement that "her stearn is small and partly white."

The knocking down and evil entreating of passengers would seem to have been a favourite diversion of the period. But, by the comparatively short and careless mention of "the young man who, on Friday night last, was assaulted in Leadenhall Street, when he was much abused, and lost his hat, &c." it is evident that he considers himself nobody. No stated sum of money is forthcoming to tempt confession, "the persons who were spectators of the wrongs done him" being simply requested to "repare to the Black Bear, in Cannon Street, where they will be requited for their trouble."

The next advertisement relates to some Flemish tapestry, "full of silk and lively colours, near eight feet deep, and not the worse for using. To be offered a great pennyworth." This is a bait held out to "persons about to marry;" and it is followed by an announcement that "the milleners' goods that was to be sold at the Naked Boy, near Strand Bridge, are sold at Mr. Van den Anker, in Lime Street." The boldness of the grammar, and the oddity, to ears of to-day, of the place at which milliners' goods were kept, are remarkable. Orthography, etymology, and syntax are all defied together in the following:

"Whereas one Jones Wiltington, Aged about 20 years. Deaf and Dum, by Trade a Painter hath lately gone away from his lodging at the 3 Kings without Ludgate, Intending for the Countrey, but is returned back to London, with a little black Mare 14 Hands high, with a Blaze on her Face, whoever can give Information of the said Mare to Mr. John Fisher at the 3 Kings aforesaid shall have Ten Shillings reward."

The literary department begins with an announcement on behalf of another man, who is still living: a "Treatise of the fear of God," by John Bunyan. The Treatise is announced to show "what it (the fear of God) is, and how distinguished from that which is not so. Also, whence it comes. Who has it. What are the effects. And what the privileges of those that have it in their hearts."

Lighter reading is provided next, by Randal Taylor, who has published an incomparable pack of cards, containing "the history of all the Popish Plots that have been in England, excellently engraven on copper-plates, with large descriptions under each card." With this light treatment of Popery—a touch of butter on the solid lump of bread—we swallow the last morsel of the sandwich of Mercurius. Only, together with the dig into the Popish plots, we have a reference to garden plots, and diggings that pertain to them.

A decree has gone forth from the "Right Honourable the Lord Maior and Councillors that Samuel Potts and Robert Davies, citizens, shall henceforth be Rakers of the City and liberties thereof, and do keep their office in Red Lyon Court, where such as desire to

be employed are to repair, when they may be entertained accordingly." Whereupon there is an offer made to contract with gardeners and farmers for supplies of compost. Compost! There goes as much scum to the raising of produce out of one plot as out of another. That is the moral we find in the bottom corner of the paper.

GOLD-HUNTING.

IN TWO PARTS. PART THE FIRST.

Whither away, young man;
Whither away?

To the land where gold doth grow,
There with sack and pack we go,
Where men revel, smoke, and fight;
Where they swelter in the sun,
Where they sleep, their delving done,
On bags of gold. Good-night!

ON the tenth of June, eighteen hundred and fifty-two, a great sorrow had fallen on two families in the north. These two families lived in Coquet Dale, on the coast of Northumberland. Their ancestors had borne great names in the days of feudal strife. They were united by many an old tradition, which had maintained a kindly friendship long after the martial glories of their race had departed. They now occupied a still and unobtrusive position in their native county, and one of them had descended to the simple rank of a yeoman. Farmer Widdrington could trace his descent from the hero who had fought so stoutly on his stumps after his legs had been smitten off at Chevy-Chace. He now saw the once fair estates of his particular branch of the family reduced to one hundred and fifty acres on a bare and chilly upland, which, from the free play of the elements about it, had acquired for his humble homestead the significant name of Windy-Haugh. From this elevated spot, he could look down, at a distance, on the stately but ruined towers of Warkworth, from whose portals his ancestors had often borne proudly the banner of the Percy against the bands of Douglas. Still beyond lay the wild ocean, and just below him lay, snugly embowered in its gardens and orchards, the imposing antique residence of Reginald Mowbray, his very good neighbour and friend.

The two families living thus near to each other, and somewhat distant from others, the intercourse between them, based on long family alliance, had been all the more uninterrupted, simple, and cordial. Mr. Mowbray, very much the richer man of the two, was of a quiet and very retiring disposition, devoted to the reading of Border antiquities and to fly-fishing. Since the death of his wife, some years previously, he had grown more confirmed in his avoidance of general society. He had only one child, a daughter, Ellen Mowbray, on whose education he had bestowed much care and expense, and she

was now his almost constant companion and solace.

His great enjoyment, next to ranging the wild moorlands through which the Coquet runs from near Carter Fell to the sea, was and had been for twenty years at least, daily, when at home, to walk slowly up the hill to neighbour Widdrington's, with his newspaper in his pocket, and have a comfortable chat with the hearty old couple who lived there. He was accustomed to drop in at the close of the day, when the farmer's labours were ended, and they had drawn round the fire. Here he communicated any news that the paper contained, and they discussed the state and prospects of the country.

Matthew Widdrington—a strong, hale man, of a clear, hard, practical head, who took a shrewd, common-sense view of things—was never in danger of being led away by his imagination, which betrayed no evidence of its existence except when awakened by some tradition of the past, by wild border legends, such as the Ghostly Bridal of Featherston-halgh, or the dirge of a Lykewake, or a story of a battle-field, so many of which lay around them in which their forefathers had stood together. Mrs. Widdrington was one of those women whose sound sense and warm motherly hearts make themselves strongly felt wherever they exist, even in the humblest dwellings. The squire had perfect reliance on her judgment and true feeling; and he never concluded the least affair of business without having well discussed it during the evening conclave at Windy-Haugh. Mrs. Widdrington had been the intimate, long-years' friend of his late wife, and showed a mother's interest in Ellen. There were no days so happy as when the bright face and merry voice of Ellen Mowbray enlivened the little farm-house.

The Widdringtons had two sons; the eldest, Andrew, a sober, plain, young man, whose ideas never overran the farm on which they lived, and on which he was an indefatigable plodder; the younger, George, a quick, ardent, and impetuous character. He had an especial passion for anything belonging to country life, and may be said to owe this, in a great degree, to Mr. Mowbray. As a lad, he had often engaged him to carry his fishing-basket and landing-net on his angling expeditions up the Coquet; the prince of Northumbrian piscatory streams. By this means he seemed to have become indispensable on such occasions to the old gentleman. His active, character; his readiness to run on all occasions, to assist in all difficulties and his fondness for the sport, had completely won the old gentleman's heart. Many a delightful summer's day they spent together amongst the falls and moors of that picturesque and singularly solitary region; by Brinkburn Priory; the quaint, grey, old village of Rothbury; amongst the heathery Siminside Hills; by the ruins of Harbottle, and its

lonely, gloomy tarn, which no traveller ever passed without awe; and away past the roaring chasm of the Linn Brig, up to its wild source in the perfectly silent hills. On many of these occasions Ellen Mowbray as a little girl had accompanied them, and the remembrance of the deeply brooding silence of the summer's day by the Halystane Well, or in the heathery wastes of Barra Burn, only broken by the wild cry of the curlew, the rushing sound of the upspringing black game, or the sight of the stately heron watching by the stream for its prey came frequently across her in the hours of town study. Was it any wonder if the image of their boy-companion, George Widdrington, came also amongst all these pleasant pictures not the less pleasantly? Especially as at later holiday times they had rambled together through all the neighbouring haunts of the dale, and were familiar with all its traditions. George could repeat by heart the whole of the ballad of the Hermit of Warkworth, and often, as children, had they spent whole afternoons in its ruined chapel and little enclosure, playing at the young banished lord and the fair Emily Neville; whose visit to the hermit has charmed the youthful imaginations of thousands besides themselves.

So much had George Widdrington won the regard of Mr. Mowbray, that he had volunteered the cost of an education for him far beyond the means and aspirations of his own parents; and had augmented his kindness by having him articled to an eminent solicitor in Newcastle.

As George spent his brief snatches of holiday at home, he continued to pass a good portion of these bright days at Kidland Grange, and to manifest all his ancient predilection for his fair playfellow. As they both grew—the one into a tall handsome, and active young man; the other into one of the most graceful and beautiful maidens that ever bloomed on the Border—the same unclouded frankness of intercourse still prevailed, as if they were indeed brother and sister. Worldly-wise people saw it, and asked what the wealthy Mr. Mowbray meant by giving this unobstructed opportunity to the son of the poor farmer Widdrington, to engross the affections of a daughter whose beauty and fortune might claim for her the noblest hand in the county? Mr. Mowbray saw it just as clearly as they did, and felt that he would rather call his favourite George Widdrington his son-in-law, than any man he knew or expected to know.

And it was, no doubt, with this settled purpose in his mind, that, on George completing the term for which he was articled, he took a wider view for him, and one more suitable to the future husband of Ellen. He sent him to London, and entered him at Lincoln's Inn, as a student for the bar. He was the more readily induced to do this from the zealous praises of his old master, who

declared that his talents were of too high an order to be wasted in the obscurity of an attorney's office, and would certainly do honour to his native county if introduced to a nobler field of exercise.

George had not only eaten his commons; but had studied hard under an eminent counsel for more than two years. When he paid his annual autumnal visit, he was observed to be as gay and agreeable as ever, and wonderfully improved by the more extended area of society, and the opportunities for amassing knowledge, both of books and life, which he had enjoyed. A finer or more intelligent young man it was declared, even by the most aristocratic people of the neighbourhood, was not to be found in the north. This was all very gratifying both to Mr. Mowbray and to his daughter. The union of the families, so long allied in friendship, was now considered a settled thing. All around them looked bright and calm.

Yet there sprang up, slightly at first, a spirit of uneasiness. During the last visit of George, Ellen thought she perceived a falling off of George's attachment; not to her, but to the ancient usages and faith of their ancient church. There was a tone in his observations when she ventured to question him on the subject which jarred painfully, though confusedly on her feelings, and the further she pressed the subject, the more her anxiety and alarm grew. She, as her family had ever been, and as her father was now, was most devotedly and conscientiously attached to the established faith. Without any illiberal prejudice—with a more ample and generous spirit of toleration than prevailed around her—she was yet terrified at the bare idea of the man, to whom she had given her heart and soul in the glow of the tenderest affection and with whom she contemplated spending her life, being infested with sceptical ideas. But George had fallen in in London, with a knot of very highly learned and brilliant men, who had adopted many of the rationalistic tenets of Strauss and Paulus; and while they accepted the doctrines of Christianity as the corpus of a sublime and philanthropic philosophy, a philosophy essential to the progress of civilisation, rejected the miraculous history of the Bible as a congeries of myths.

Pressed by Ellen with an uneasy importunity on the subject, George did not hesitate to open all his views to her, trusting to her liberal education, and her undoubted affection for him, for at least a patient tolerance of his conscientious belief. But he had not calculated truly on the effect which such a revolution must have upon her deeply-rooted sentiments, and on the old, hereditary faith of her family. She shrunk in consternation from the divided faith which the future seemed to menace, instead of the spiritual as well as affectionate union which she had relied upon. She saw with equal consternation the terror

and anger, and unhappiness which the knowledge of such a dread discovery would inevitably produce, both in her father's mind and in those of George's own parents. They were all of the most strictly orthodox and unswerving faith in the historic truth of their religion, and in the sacred authority of the tenets of their own church.

After George's return to London, the serious and even sad air which nothing could prevent falling over the features of Ellen, soon excited the anxiety of both her father and of the Widdringtons; to whom the same perceptions and feelings became as quickly and invariably common as if communicated by a mesmeric sympathy. Enquiries, wonders, and letters followed with so much activity, that the fatal secret could not long remain one. The old people on both sides were struck dumb with dismay. Old Mr. Mowbray sent for George down, and every means which parental affection and authority could desire to drive this heresy from his mind were exerted, but in vain. All that George pleaded for was that they should give him time to reconsider his opinions, and to satisfy himself further on what concerned himself especially. But this was what Mr. Mowbray could form no conception of. He was so hereditarily rooted on his own religious faith, that he could not conceive of any one entertaining a doubt on any part of it, without a feeling of indignation and horror. He, therefore, reminded George of all he had done, and all he proposed to do, and expressed his deep chagrin to find that it had been all wasted on a young man who had displayed such weakness. He concluded by declaring that until George abandoned his absurd and wicked fancies, he should withhold his friendship and assistance.

George Widdrington issued from the old familiar doors of the Grange in a state of indescribable misery. Ruin or a contemptible hypocrisy were before him. We shall not attempt to describe the horrors of the night which succeeded this cruel interview. When he entered his own home, his parents and brother sat in a dejected silence. No word was said, and he went up to his room, and flung himself in a stupor of grief on his bed. But with the rising sun he stood on the door-stone of his native cottage, with a small valise in his hand, and with the air of a traveller. It was a splendid morning. The dew lay thick on the grass, glittering in the sun, like myriads of diamonds, but everything except the birds, was profoundly still. The landscape itself, and the dwellings of men in it, yet seemed to sleep. The house slept, as it were, with all its inhabitants, for it was an hour when even the early dwellers in the country were not yet astir.

As the young man stood there for a moment, years of bright summers passed over his heart. All that was happy, and beautiful, and tender, came up as from a sacred foun-

tain in his soul. The spirit of the past, with all its heavenly sweetness and affection, well nigh conquered him. He cast one quick look into the future, where all his household gods lay shattered around him, and the dreary solitude of it appalled him. He paused—almost yielded; but some new idea shot across him, and he bounded down the slope and disappeared, pursued by the trenchant thought that perhaps he should never see the beloved ones he thus left, any more.

We shall not dwell on the gloomy period of affliction to all parties which followed. George reflected in consternation and deepest wretchedness in his chambers, on his position and prospects. His brilliant hopes were suddenly destroyed. To pursue his legal career was impossible. True, he could procure an engagement in a lawyer's office, but his proud spirit revolted at the retrograde movement; and, in the depth of his dejection, a new vision suddenly presented itself. The wonderful tidings of the gold fields of Australia had just burst on the public. He would go!

He acted instantly on the impulse. There was a pleasure in retiring for a while from the domestic storm, in action and change of scene. He sold his books and his few effects, and found himself master of twenty pounds. His finances dictated his position, and though inwardly shrinking from it, he dared it. He took an intermediate passage, hoping that he should meet at the distant port no one who knew him. Once more he wrote letters to his parents and to Ellen, overflowing with all the tenderness that he felt, protesting the pain which he felt, in the pain which he knew that he must have given. Before he set sail, he received answers equally full of sorrow and affection. Ellen, in the tone of her old attachment, approved of his resolution to make this voyage, and most tenderly united in his hope that its result might be every way auspicious. There was balm in this, though he knew the tendency of the hope expressed.

The ship was on its way, and George Widdrington found himself in a new world, and among strange associates. There were about two hundred passengers in the second class, and when he went below to his berth, he stood confounded at the scene before him. However he might have resolved to suppress his feelings, he could not see his quarters for the next three or four months without a feeling of disgust and repulsion.

In a long apartment, divided off into small stalls, as it were in a market—stalls of some seven feet long by three or four feet wide, and in which there was just room for a half-yard wide mattress—he made one of a rude crowd with whom he had no sympathy, nor for the language and spirit of many of them, even toleration. The very lowest purloins of Whitechapel and Ratcliffe Highway seemed to have furnished a liberal quota of the thing; and the squalling of children and

messes of cooking were to him something frightful.

The first few days were rather stormy. Luckily George was well, and could escape to the deck. As he emerged from the hatchway, however, one of his fondest hopes was at once dissipated. He was met with an exclamation of surprise by an old acquaintance. It was Adam Swinburne, who had passed his apprenticeship as a surgeon in Newcastle, and was here as the ship's doctor.

"George Widdrington! and below there! What, in the name of all wonders, is the meaning of this?" was the young man's exclamation. George took him by the arm, and leading him forward, explained so much of the mystery as that he had suddenly resolved on a trip to the gold-fields, and as it, of course, had at first been done without the knowledge of his friends, he had from necessity taken an intermediate berth. He begged Adam Swinburne to keep his confidence as to who he was, and hoped there were no other people from the north in the cabin.

"Not a soul!" said the warm-hearted Adam. "But, my good fellow, you cannot stay down there. It is impossible. I have a whole stern cabin, large and airy; that's your place, and a pleasant time we will have of it. Come along."

But George hung back. "It can't be, Adam. It would require forty pounds to advance me to the dignity of a cabin passenger; and see, I have just four," pulling out that number of sovereigns. "My mother sent me sixty pounds; but I guessed well enough where it came from, and I sent it back with my soul's thanks."

"That's all right," said Adam Swinburne, "but now hear. I shall have half-a-sovereign for every passenger on arrival. There are about two hundred. I'll settle all that, and we'll balance out of the first nugget."

"But if we are drowned," said George, smiling, "who's to pay for me then?"

"Why, let the proprietors come after us for it," said the kind-hearted youth, and laughing, lugged George away by the arm into the cabin.

"A patient already?" said the Captain, who was still sitting at the breakfast-table, with a number of ladies and gentlemen.

"No; a passenger," said Adam, still going on towards his cabin. George seemed to breathe again as he entered its airy space with its books and comfortable furniture, and recalled the filth, and stenches, and darkness below, with all its motley crowds. The business was soon arranged by Adam with the Captain. George's trunk was carried in, and a fresh bed added. George's intelligence and gentlemanly bearing soon made him a welcome inmate of the cuddy, and, as the voyage went on, he saw ample cause to congratulate himself on escaping from below. Two hundred people who had been accustomed on land to lives of

daily labour, and to a degree of restraint from the presence of their employers, here thrown together for weeks and months, without an object but to drink of the plentiful stores of brandy which the ship afforded; to gamble, and sing, and fight, ere long presented a strange spectacle, in which the coarse rioted, and the meek and more refined shrunk aside and suffered. The pleasantest hour for contemplating this class was that after sunset, when, by common consent, they nearly all turned out, solaced themselves by singing, and on moonlight nights by a dance. Repetition, indeed, wore away even the charm of this, when "The Red Cross Knight," "The Pope," "Cheer, Boys, Cheer!" and "Nora, the Pride of Kildare," had been each chaunted their thousandth time. Listening, one evening, as they leant against the poop-rail, George heard a lovely voice singing this homely ballad:

The lord said to his ladie,
As he mounted his horse,
Beware of Lone Lankin
That lies in the moss.

The lord said to his ladie,
As he rode away,
Beware of Lone Lankin
That lies in the clay.

What care I for Lankin,
Or any of his gang?
My doors are all shut
And barred with a stang.

There were six little windows
And they were all shut,
But one little window,
And that was forgot.
And at that little window
Long Lankin crept in.

"That's a Northumbrian!" exclaimed George.

"Ay, that it is," said Adam Swinburne. "It is no other than Tom Boyd, a shepherd of Todstead; and what do you think? That he is bound for the diggings? No; but to wander after a flock in the far bush."

"I wish him joy," said George.

"And he'll have it," said Adam, "for he has a lot of old books, that he has picked up at the stalls in London, with a lot of old ballads and legends in his head, and he actually revels in the idea of years of uninterrupted solitude. But, hark!" Tom Boyd was still humming at the ballad, to the wonder of the town-growth of singers:

Where's the ladies of the hall?
Says the Lankin:
They're up in the chambers,
Says Orange to him.

How shall we get them down?
Says the Lankin.
Prick the baby in the cradle,
Says Orange to him.

Still did she prick it,
 And "Bee-ba" she cried,
 Come down, devout mistress,
 And still your own child.
 Oh! still my child, Orange,
 Still him with a bell.
 I can't still him, ladie,
 Till you come down yersell, &c.

Tom's song was "caviare to the general;" but, from that day, many a pleasant talk had George and Adam with the shepherd of Todstead, while the ship rushed through the waters of the tropics, and with the long summer days came long memories of mountain, wave, and stream in the Northern dales. Many a long, silent meditation had George Widdrington, as he glanced over the ship's side, where sad regrets and deep mortifications mingled with fondest thoughts of those he left behind.

But now the ship was at land. The two friends stepped on shore in wonder. Where, seventeen years before, spread a green forest, peopled only by kangaroos and houseless natives, a great metropolis and a countless throng of busy people met their eyes. Ships were crowded at the quays; piles of merchandise lay on the shore; and thousands of people—all eager in quest of gain—all hurrying to and fro, intent on their own thoughts and affairs, and on nought beside—waded along it knee-deep in mud, amid the din and confusion of drays, shouting drivers, mobs of horses, omnibuses and droshkies, bearing uncouth freights of hairy-faced men and flaunting women.

They hurried as fast as they could out of the town, having put into the care of a trusty Northumbrian merchant, letters from home, and a good remittance from Adam to his mother and sister. Still more extraordinary were the scenes on the road, if road that could be called, which was one ghastly reiteration of frightful bogs, ploughed yards-deep by incessant wheels; yawning gullies, and rocks and hills. The whole of this Tartarean track was thronged by huge drays, heavily laden, and dragged along by enormous teams of bullocks. Carts, drays, bullocks, horses, lay in ruins and in death along the whole line, and still the wondrous stream of life and labour dragged, rolled, and tumbled along, amid a deafening din of oaths and curses, amid smash and crashes; vehicles stuck fast in hopeless morasses, or dashed over hedges and precipitous gullies; people confounded by their difficulties, or brought to a stand by a tremendous break-down.

Still our travellers marched on in wonder, but in comparative ease, carrying only their rugs and damper at their backs, with the indispensable panikin, quart-pot, and revolver at their girdles. In about a week from leaving Melbourne, they found themselves at Sawpit Gully only four miles short of Forest Creek. They had halted for the night, stretched their little blanket-tent over a cord fastened to two trees, kindled a fire in front,

and were preparing for tea. Adam was arranging a couple of beefsteaks on two pointed sticks, at the fire, and George was returning from the creek with the quart-pots full of water, when up came three men dressed as diggers, but armed with guns. One of them stayed with Adam at the fire, and the other two confronted George at some little distance. They presented their gun-muzzles simultaneously at his head, and said, "Quick, mates! Shell out!"

George took a glance at them, and set them down for two of the most strong-built and brutal vagabonds that he had ever beheld. They had bushes of black hair about their faces, and a genuine devil's expression. But they did not leave him much time for criticising them. They repeated the word "Quick!" and backed it by a fierce oath. George, who was not only courageous but most adroitly expert in his movements, stooped as to set down his water, and rose with his revolver in his hand. With his left arm he knocked up the gun-muzzle of one of the villains, discharged one of his barrels at his head, and, with the rapidity of lightning, seized the gun of the other, and repeated his fire. This time the ball went through the fellow's hat, but not through his head, and he darted away through the bush. The other lay dead on the ground. George was in the act of sending a second bullet after the flying thief, when he beheld his friend Adam struggling on the ground, and a large fellow kneeling on his chest, busily plundering him. George sprang towards him, when he rose and made off also. A shot was sent after him, and the fellow gave a leap, clapped his hand on his right shoulder, but continued his flight.

George Widdrington had no time to pursue him. For, looking at poor Adam, he beheld him stretched on his back, his face and hands covered with blood, and no sign of life but a heavy groaning which escaped him.

"Adam! my dear fellow, Adam! can you speak?" cried George frantically. There was no reply, but another deep groan. "Oh God! he is killed," cried George, "and what shall I do?" He sprang up, looked wildly around as for assistance; but, seeing no one on the road, he darted away to the quart pots, and finding one still with its contents in it, he came, and kneeling down, washed away the blood from Adam's face.

It was a horrible sight. The nose appeared actually smashed. There was a deep wound on the cheek, and the whole face appeared bruised and crushed. The hands were bloody with a wound; the finger on which his friend had worn a handsome ring, was stripped of skin: the wretch having evidently taken the finger in his mouth and torn off the ring with his teeth. The poor fellow's gold watch still lay by his side, having been left in the hurry of retreat.

While George was washing Adam's hands, and dropping tears over him like a child, the mangled man attempted to speak, but could not articulate a syllable; and George gazing in distraction at him, believed that his jaw was broken. At this instant his ear caught the rapid tramp of a horse in canter. He started up, and saw a man in a broad straw hat riding along the road. He gave a loud whoop, and was beginning to run towards the road when the horseman turned his steed and came quickly at his call. A moment's glance at the scene, and he comprehended the whole of it.

"Bushrangers!" he exclaimed. "Is your friend alive?"

"I hope so," replied George, sadly; "but he is awfully hurt."

"Then, there is no time to be lost. I'll send you a surgeon; but there is an empty cart coming along. It is mine. Stop it, and keep it here."

Away the storekeeper—for such he was—galloped, and soon after the cart came in sight, and George stopped it. The man who was with it said, looking at the wounded surgeon, "Those infernal bushrangers again, I see. There is a ferocious set of them hereabouts. Have you given your mate a little brandy?"

Without stopping for a reply he pulled a quart bottle from his pocket, poured a quantity into his panikin, and George raising poor Adam's head, the carter poured a little between his teeth. Adam, as if the fiery liquor choked him, gave a short cough, opened his eyes, and again attempted to speak.

"What is it, dear Adam?" said George, stooping eagerly down to him. "What is it?"

"O, don't bother him yet!" said the man. "You see he's coming about by degrees. There's nothing like a nobbler after all, mate. Tak' a sup yourself." With that he poured out a full panikin and handed it to George. George took a draught, for he was ready to sink with excitement and exhaustion.

"Pugh, man, that's nothing, that's not a thimbleful," George shook his head. "Well, well, all's one," said the fellow, and draining the panikin, added, "And here comes the doctor—all right!"

The doctor leaped from the saddle, threw the reins to the carter, stooped and took the wounded man's wrist.

"All's well, here," he said, "I suspect there is no injury but this ugly outward bruise; but that's bad enough. A little more water. Let us see." He felt the lacerated nose, traced the course of the jaw-bone, and said, "Can you open your mouth, my friend?" Adam opened his mouth, and spoke. "No harm to the jaw, but there is a heavy bruise behind the head."

The doctor drew out an instrument case, containing scissors and adhesive plaster, and with much care, strapped up the wounds;

the patient was laid on the cart, and a rug thrown over him, George riding with him to steady and support his head on the jolting road. The doctor rode forward, telling the carter to come to his tent.

Arrived at the doctor's tent, Adam was soon able to explain to them the way in which he had received his injuries. Having his last twenty pounds in his pocket, he was not inclined to part with it, and prepared for a struggle with his antagonists. But one of them just before advancing towards George, felled him by a blow of a gun-stock on the back of the head. Recovering his senses, however, he found a fellow ransacking his pockets. Instantly grappling with him, both had a desperate struggle on the ground, till Adam getting uppermost, and beating the wretch well about the head, he suddenly seized his hand in his teeth and bit it furiously. This compelled Adam to let go, when they both sprang up together, and while Adam was in the act of drawing his revolver, the bushranger seizing his gun by the butt-end and by the barrel brought it down across his face with all his might. He fell senseless, and knew no more.

The following day the little blanket tent was set up near the doctor's, who continued to attend to the patient with the kindest assiduity, and to send the friends supplies from his table to this little tent. It was two days before Adam was able to turn out, and then with his face so swollen and patched, that he declared with something of his old humour, that he had forsworn looking-glasses for ever.

As soon as Adam could be left alone George set out to try his luck at digging. The scene that met his eye as he drew near to the Forest Creek was strange enough. Twenty thousand people, at least, were all scuffling together like ants in an ant's nest, or tadpoles in a pool. The whole valley through which ran the creek or brook, for several miles was in the act of being turned upside down. Close as the crowd could press upon each other so as to leave the prescribed number of feet to each party, they were digging, delving, throwing up earth, carrying away bags of it, supposed to contain the gold, to the creek, and there delivering it to other crowds who, at a long line of cradles, were in as great a bustle, throwing in the earth, rocking it to and fro under deluges of water from tin dippers. There was an incessant noise of rattling cradles, and shouting voices. Strange figures all yellow with clay, and disguised in bushy beards, and veils to keep off the flies, seemed too desperately busy to have time to breathe. It was all one agitated scene of elbowing, swearing, hacking, hewing, and shovelling. Not a tree was left standing over the whole great space, and the sun flamed down on unsheltered heaps and holes of gravel, with a burning, sweltering force.

George wandered along in astonishment and despair. Where was any one who had not the qualities of Sam Slick's Kentuckian, half-horse, half-alligator, to set in amongst that rude and confused crew?

At length he pitched, in utter desperation, on a little vacant space.

"Avast there, mate," shouted a great, tall sailor, "that belongs to a Dutchman, don't you see his pegs?"

George saw the pegs and moved on. It was long before he could see a single yard of unoccupied ground, but at length he discovered a small triangular spot between three other claims. He took one pick.

"Hands off there, old fellow! That is mine," said the huge head of a huge brick-red man, just lifted above the ground out of a hole.

"Yours?" said George, mildly, "why, you have one already."

"Yes," replied the large head, "but that's my little parlour; d'ye object? If so, I'll get a neighbour to occupy it."

"No," said George, and walked on, saying to himself, "Is this a scene for a gentleman?"

Many a long hunt, and many a rude rebuff he experienced before he could secure a claim; and when he began to dig he was speedily reminded of the romantic accounts he had read, of just turning the gold out of the soft earth a few feet deep, as you would turn out potatoes. The gravel that he had to delve into was as hard set as a brick wall. Totally unused to manual labour, though yielding to no one in strength, he soon found that it was not very like wielding a pen at a desk. The sun seemed at once to burn off the very skin of his face, neck, and hands, and to melt him down as a contribution to the stream. His hands were soon covered with blisters, and a painful sense came over his mind that if he found gold he would have most dearly earned it when got. Wearied, dejected, and sore, as if the sun had really flayed him alive, he returned to the tent at evening, and sat down silent, and on the verge of despair. Never, since he was born, had he had such a suspicion that he was a fool.

But Adam set about to cheer him up, told him all would go well in a while, and insisted the next day on going to look on, if not to help. Very soon he jumped into the hole, took his turn with the pick and shovel, and from that day worked regularly and stoutly. In about a week, they had got down to nearly the depth of the surrounding holes, whose owners had already finished, and were gone away to fresh ground.

"We are certainly about down," said George, striking his pick into the gravel at his feet; when down indeed it went, and he tumbled into a hole like a cellar beneath! The active neighbours had undermined their claims, and had walked off with the booty! Soon there was a crowd of diggers round the

hole, pretty well aware of what would take place, and loud was the laughter at "the gentleman's cellar," and loud exclamations of "what a sell!"

We shall not follow our heroes step by step, through this arduous field. Their experience was varied, often comical, but by no means amusing to them—least of all, profitable. The four pounds of George Widdrington—their sole resource, for Adam's little fund was gone—were rapidly melting away; and of all the tons of gold which had been secured, not an ounce had yet fallen to their share. They had worked on the hill and in the valley; in the wet and in the dry. They had rushed away to new rushes, and tried fresh spots for themselves, with the same result. Starvation stood before them. "This will never do!" exclaimed Adam Swinburne. And the next morning there stretched across the front of their little blanket-tent, occupying some six feet by five, and three feet high, in large black letters traced on a piece of calico with the end of a bruised stick, and by the aid of a blacking-bottle, this magnificent monograph, "MEDICAL HALL. DR. SWINBURNE, FROM THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS."

Let us see what will come of that.

NUMBER SEVEN.

EVERY one knows with how many things—divine as well as human—the number seven is connected. It occurs in Sacred Scripture and ecclesiastical ordinance no less than in Asiatic superstitions; it is recognised in works of our illustrious Wykeham, and also in Grecian architecture; it pervades the authentic history of nations as well as their fable and romance; and in Europe as well as in the East, a mysterious significance appears to belong to it.

To begin with a rough glance at the use of seven. Looking, first, at its occurrence in the Scriptures, and in ordinances of the Catholic Church, we have the seven-fold gifts of the Holy Spirit; the seven sentences of our Lord, and the seven clauses of His prayer; the representation by St. John in his Apocalypse of the Wonderful Being who dwells in celestial grandeur, as walking in the midst of seven golden lamps, which are churches; we are warned against the seven deadly sins, and exhorted to the seven principal virtues and the seven works of mercy; to the traditional merit of this holy number the ordinance of seven sacraments has ever been attributed, and the articles of faith in relation to the Trinity were (in a synod held at York in fourteen hundred and sixty-six) arranged into seven, as were those relating to the nature of our Lord. The Church, moreover, recites the seven penitential Psalms, and observes the seven hours or offices of daily prayer. The schoolmen in the middle ages were fond of speculating on the mystical

influence of the number seven—"the number of perfection," and of tracing its connection with most of the events set forth in the sacred books, from the mighty work of creation recorded in Genesis, in which God was believed to have employed seven angels, down to the seven years' service of Jacob for his wives. "It is that number," says Leon Batista Alberti, "in which the Almighty himself, the maker of all things, takes particular delight."

But to pass from things sublime to things sublimary. The ancient connection of the number seven with architecture might alone form the topic of a small essay. Solomon writes, "Wisdom hath built her house: she hath hewn out her seven pillars." And Gentiles as well as Jews seem to have had a community of ideas with respect to this number. It is found in the two most remarkable temples of Grecian antiquity, viz., the Cella of the Parthenon, which is supported by seven pillars on either side, and the colossal temple of Jupiter Olympius at Agrigentum, which is adorned with seven columns on the east and west, and fourteen on the sides. Wykeham, in the plans of his chapels at Winchester and Oxford, divided them longitudinally by seven. In other English architecture, older as well as later, the number seven constantly recurs, for example, in the cathedral churches of York, Durham, Lichfield, Exeter, and Bristol, the abbey church of Westminster, the churches of Ramsey, Waltham, Buildwas, and St. Alban's (in the Norman part); at Castle Acre, and at St. George's, Windsor. It prevailed especially in France, as we may find in the cathedral churches of Paris, Amiens, Chartres, Evreux, &c.

Then, to turn from the substantial monuments of mediæval time to the fabulous theories of Asiatic speculation; we have the cycles of seven thousand years seen by the mysterious Persian bird, or griffin, Simurgh, who, according to Eastern romance, had lived to see the earth seven times filled with animated beings, and seven times a perfect void, and who predicted that the race of Adam would endure for seven thousand years, and then give place to beings of more perfect nature, with whom the earth would end. The Hindus reverence the mysterious names of the seven worlds. Amongst this remarkable people, the Creator shines with seven rays; he is Light or the effulgent Power, who is held to be manifest in the solar orb, and to pervade or illumine the seven worlds or abodes—the seven mansions of all created beings. The earth is held, in Hindu belief, the first or lowest of these; then, there is the world of renewed existence, in which beings passed from earth exist again, but without sensation, until the end of the present order of things; Heaven, or the upper world, the abode of the good; the middle world—an intermediate region; the world of birth,

where the inhabitants of the existing globe who shall be destroyed at its conflagration will be born again; the mansion of the blessed; and finally, the seventh world, the sublime abode, the residence of Brahme himself. The number seven enters also into one of the Hindu modes of trial by ordeal, seven leaves of each of three kinds of herbs being fastened on the hands of the accused with seven threads.

The seven sacred evolutions of the Moslems round the Black Stone of Mecca, is another example (and the last we shall give) of the connection of this mysterious number with the superstitions of Asia.

Then, as affecting human life, the old physicians and philosophers held that every period of seven years effected an alteration in the human system. Thus, the period of infancy was fixed at seven years, and there was another septennium of boyhood. The prevailing notion of the climacteric years was founded on the same tenet, and thence also we derive the Seven Ages of Man. There are the seven senses, and we have lately seen discussed the superstition connected with a seventh son. Among the Romans, infants who died before attaining the seventh month of their age had not the ordinary rites of sepulture. So, in some parts of the East, children who die under seven years are not mourned by their parents.

The ancients boasted, as we all know, the seven wonders of the world; and in modern ages we hear of the seven wonders of Dauphiné, and the seven wonders of Wales.

In the great Isle of Arran may still be seen the grave of the seven Romans, which bears an inscription of remote Saxon antiquity; and in the town of Cell Belough there were the seven streets inhabited by strangers. Another of the marvels of Ireland was the changing of sundry Irish natives into wolves every seven years, according to Giraldus.

In legendary lore and tales of enchantments the number seven occurs prominently. The realities of manhood have not obliterated what we used to read about a service to a giant or a fairy for seven years, and a spell that was to endure for seven years, like the seven years' sleep of the Beauty in the fairy tale, and St. Patrick's memorable banishment of the reptiles and demons for seven years, seven months, and seven days. Both ancient and modern fable adorned their annals with seven sleepers, and chivalry and romance furnished Christendom with seven champions.

We might go on to trace the occurrence of the number seven in classical writings and Roman story. It has, however, come down to modern times in many of our own usages and familiar things, besides the nomenclature of the seven days of the week, derived from the seven known planets. In this country, seven years is in many particulars a significant period of time. We serve seven years'

apprenticeship, elect parliament for seven years, punish by seven years' transportation, and take seven years' leases of property.

Finally, in music there are familiar instances of its prevalence. There were seven notes in the Greek diatonic scale; the choruses of Æschylus and Sophocles were divided into lines of seven syllables, and for strophe and antistrophe there were seven alternate singers.

But what is the meaning of all this dwelling on the number seven? It is not the only number upon which a run is made, though perhaps the chief. Each number had with the Pythagoreans a meaning, and among them seven was a sacred number, as it had been considered from the earliest times. They called it a number of perfection, because it is composed of three and four, the triangle and square. By triangle and square all things, they said, were capable of being measured, therefore the number that included both in its significance, was the number of perfection, of fitness, quantity, diversity. It was also the number of life, because it contains body and soul, body being of four elements, soul of three powers, rational, irascible, and concupiscible. It is because seven is the number of perfection, said old commentators, that we are told to forgive our enemies seventy times seven times—that is to say, most perfectly.

Although Pythagoras dwelt on the number seven, it was, to a certain extent, a mystical and consecrated number even before his time. It was dwelt upon by Homer and Hesiod. The Egyptians, according to the belief that there were seven planets, made a sevenfold division of the heavens and of sacred things. It is indeed to the rest from Creation on the seventh day that all these ideas of the sacred number are to be traced back. Because of its frequent occurrence in the Scriptures Saint Augustine and Luther taught that the number must be considered really sacred.

Having explained so much, we will dwell a little more upon its frequency. First as to its apparent consecration to the Jews, as when the seventh day was declared holy, seven days were appointed for the consecration of the high priest, seven victims were appointed for many sacrifices. There were seven lamps to the golden candlestick, afterwards there were seven churches of the Christians. Seven times the blood of the sin-offering was sprinkled, oil was sprinkled on the altar seven times at the consecration of Aaron. Not only was every seventh day a sabbath, but seven other days in every year were to be kept equally holy. There were seven days of eating unfermented bread; seven weeks between Passover and Pentecost; every seventh year was a year of rest, and

after every seven times seven a jubilee. Most of the great feasts of the Jews occurred in the seventh month.

As a number of completeness and sufficiency it is used often. A lamb must have been seven days with its dam before it could be sacrificed; seven days the Lord waited before sending the flood; seven days Noah waited between each time of sending out the dove; Jacob served seven years for Rachel; there were seven years of plenty and seven years of scarcity in Egypt; Samson was bound with seven bands. On the seventh day, when seven priests blew seven trumpets, and went seven times about the walls of Jericho, the town was taken.

It is the number also of power, a majority. Seven spirits are before the Throne, harmonious in their influence on man as the seven notes in music. The Beast sought power with seven heads. Rome on the seven hills had seven kings. Seven times Jacob bowed before his brother Esau. It is also the number of purification, as when Naaman washed seven times in Jordan. Such illustrations might be almost infinitely multiplied. Man, as we before said, was assumed to grow by sevens. They were arranged thus:—After the first seven months the first teeth come, after the first seven years they fall, and others come in place of them, after the second seven years puberty comes, after the third comes perfect womanhood and manhood. We say, therefore, to this day in England, when three time seven years are complete, at twenty-one, a person is of age. During this third seven years he has been increasing in length; during the fourth seven years he grows no more in length, but increases in breadth, and completes the definition of his perfect shape. During the fifth seven years the man, perfect in form, is perfected in vigour, and during the sixth period of seven years retains his powers unabated. In the seventh period of seven years prudence is perfected, and thus during the period expressed by seven times seven, man is at his completest. Finally, when we come to ten times seven, at which ends the multiplication by the simple numbers, man has attained the appointed number of his days, threescore and ten.

Any quantity of paper might, in fact, easily be covered with illustrations of the wonderful significance of seven. There need to be reckoned seven liberal arts, seven mechanical arts, and seven prohibited arts. It was said there are seven colours (as we still say), seven metals (as we cease to say), gold, silver, copper, lead, tin, iron, and quicksilver; seven holes in a man's head, two to the nose, two to the ears, two to the eyes, one to the mouth.

But of the seven capital sins (in journalism) boring a reader is the greatest.

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MY BLIND SISTER.

THIS was how I found it out. Lettie and I were sitting in the window at our work—it was some mourning we were making for our rector's family—and it had to be sent home the next day early. She said, "Jane, it seems as if the sun had given up shining; how dull everything looks! don't you think so?"

I did not notice it; there was still an hour's daylight. She put up her hand to her forehead as if it pained her, so I bade her go out for a turn in the garden; we had sat close to our sewing all the day, and the young thing was tired: even I was, and my eyes ached wearily. She went along by the flower-bed, and gathered a few roses—we were in the middle of July then—and gave them to me through the window, saying that she would go down into the town for some trimmings we wanted to finish the dresses. I would rather she had stayed at home, and replied that the shops would be shut; but she was not listening, and went away down the path as I spoke. It was dusk when she came back; I had just shut the window, and was lighting my candle; she said, "I could not get the fringe, Jane," and then laying her bonnet on the dresser, took up her work. After she had sewed perhaps five minutes she dropped her hands on her knees, and such a strange, hopeless expression came into her face, that I was quite shocked and frightened.

"What ails you, Lettie? what can have happened?" I asked, suspecting I scarcely knew what.

She looked at me drearily in silence for some moments, and then said hastily, "I might as well tell you at once, Jane,—I'm going blind."

My work fell to the ground, and I uttered a startled cry.

"Don't take on about it, Jane; it can't be helped," she added.

"It is only a fancy of yours, Lettie; I shall have you to Doctor Nash in the morning. What has made you take such a notion into your head all at once," said I, for I thought this was another nervous whim. Lettie had been a good deal indulged by our mother before she died, and had shown her-

self not a little headstrong sometimes, as well as fanciful.

"It is of no use, Jane; I have been to Doctor Nash myself, and he said plainly that I was going blind. I have been to him twice before: I knew what was coming. Oh, Janey! what shall we do? what shall we do?" and having borne up thus far she broke down, and sobbed aloud, with her face on her arms on the table.

"We shall do very well. In the first place, I don't believe Doctor Nash knows anything about it; and, in the next, I shall have you up to London to a great doctor, and hear what he says before I give in to thinking that you are to be blind all your days."

She was a little cheered by this.

"To London, Janey! but where is the money to come from?" she asked.

"Leave that to me. I'll arrange somehow." It was very puzzling to me to settle how just then, but I have a firm conviction that where there is a will to do anything, a way may generally be found, and I meant to find it.

She took up her work, but I bade her leave it. "You will not set another stitch, Lettie," I said; "you may just play on the old piano and sing your bits of songs, and get out into the fresh air—you have been kept too close, and are pale to what you were. Go to bed now like a good little lassie; I'll do by myself."

"But there is so much to finish, Janey."

"Not a stitch that you'll touch, Lettie; so kiss me good-night, and get away."

"And you don't think much of what Doctor Nash said?" she asked very wistfully.

"No! I've no opinion of him at all." And hearing me speak up in my natural way (though my heart was doubting all the time), she went away comforted, and in better hope. I had put it off before her, because she would have given way to fretting, if I had seemed to believe what the doctor said; but, as I drew my needle through and through my work till three hours past midnight, I had often to stop to wipe the tears from my eyes.

There were only two of us—Lettie and myself—and we had neither father nor mother, nor indeed any relatives whom we knew.

Lettie was seventeen, and I was four years older. We were both dressmakers, and either worked at home or went out by the day. We lived in a small, thatched, three-roomed cottage outside the town, which had a nice garden in front. Some people had told us that if we moved into the town we should get better employ; but both Lettie and I liked the place where we had been born so much better than the closed-in streets, that we had never got changed, and were not wishful to. Our rent was not much, but we were rather put to it sometimes to get it made up by the day, for our landlady was very sharp upon her tenants, and if they were ever so little behindhand, she gave them notice directly.

I set my wits to work how to get the money to take Lettie to London; but all that night no idea came to me, and the next day it was the same. With two pair of hands we had maintained ourselves decently; but how was it going to be now that there was only one! Rich folks little think how hard it is for many of us poor day-workers to live on our little earnings, much more to spare for an evil day.

II.

SUNDAY found me still undecided, but that was our holiday, and I meant to see Doctor Nash myself while Lettie was gone to chapel. She made herself very nice, for she had a modest pride in her looks which becomes a girl. I thought her very pretty myself, and so did the neighbours; she had clear, small features, and a pale colour in her cheeks, soft brown hair, and hazel eyes. It was not easy to see that anything ailed them, unless you looked into them very closely, and then there was a dimness to be seen about them, which might be disease. She had put off thinking about herself, and was as merry as a cricket when she went down the lane in her white bonnet and clean muslin gown. She nodded to me (I was watching her from the doorway), and smiled quite happily. I was as proud of Lettie as ever my mother had been. She was always such a clever, warm-hearted little thing; for all her high temper.

When she was fairly gone, and the church bells ceased, I dressed myself in haste, and set off into the town to see Doctor Nash. He was at home, and his man showed me into the surgery, where I had to wait may-be an hour. When the doctor came in, he asked sharply why I could not have put off my visit till Monday; was my business so pressing? He did not consider how precious were the work-days to us, or may-be he would not have spoken so—for he was a benevolent man, as we had every reason to know; he having attended our mother through her last illness as carefully as if she had been a rich lady, though we could never hope to pay him. I explained what I had come about,

and he softened then, but would not alter what he had told Lettie himself.

"She has been with me three or four times," he said. "She is an interesting little girl; it is a great pity, but I do not think her sight can be saved—I don't indeed, Jane."

He explained to me why he was of this opinion, and how the disease would advance, more lengthily than needs to be set down here. Then he said he could get her admitted into the Blind Institution if we liked; and that I must keep her well, and send her out of doors constantly. And so I went home again, with very little hope left, as you may well think, after what I had heard.

I did not tell Lettie where I had been, and she never suspected. There was no chapel that afternoon, and we were getting ready to take a walk along the river bank, as we generally did on fine Sundays (for all the town went there, and it freshened us up to see the holiday people far more than if we had stopped at home reading our books, as many say it is only right to do), when one of our neighbours came in with her son. Mrs. Crofts was a widow, and Harry was studying medicine with Doctor Nash. They were both kind friends of ours; and, between Lettie and the young man, there had been for ever so long a sort of boy and girl liking; but I do not think they had spoken to each other yet. Lettie coloured up when Harry appeared, and went into the garden to show him, she said, the white moss-rose that was full of bloom by the kitchen window; but they stayed whispering over it so long, that I did not think it was only that they were talking about. Then Harry went out at the gate looking downcast and vexed, and Lettie came back into the house with a queer wild look in her face that I did not like. Mrs. Crofts said, "Is Harry gone?" and my sister made her a short answer, and went into the bed-room.

"Harry is going up to London very soon; I shall be glad to have the examinations over and him settled. Doctor Nash thinks very well of him; he is a good young fellow, Jane." I replied that he had always been a favourite of mine, and I hoped he would do well; but, listening for Lettie's coming to us, perhaps I seemed rather cold and stiff; for Mrs. Crofts asked if I was not well, or if there was anything on my mind; so I told her about poor Lettie's sight.

"I've seen no appearance of blindness; Harry never said a word. You don't think it can be true?" she asked. I did not know what to think. I was sure that, in that whispering over the rose-tree, my sister had told young Mr. Crofts; and I wished his mother would go away, that I might comfort her. At last she went. Then I called to Lettie, who came at once. She had been fretting; but, as she tried to hide it, I made no remark, and we went down the lane to the river meadows in silence. The first person we met was Harry Crofts. Lettie seemed put out when

he joined us, and turned back. She stayed behind, and was presently in company with our landlady, Mrs. Davis, who was taking the air in a little wheeled chair drawn by a footman. Mrs. Davis had always noticed Lettie. Harry Crofts looked back once or twice to see if she was following; but, when he found she was not, he proposed to wait for her, and we sat down by the water on a tree trunk which lay there.

"This is a sad thing about Lettie's eyes, Jane," he said suddenly.

"Yes, it is. What do you think about them? Is there any chance for her?"

"Doctor Nash says not; but, Jane, next week Philipson, the best oculist in England, is coming to stay a couple of days with Nash. Let him see her."

"I meant to try to get her to London for advice."

"There is nobody so clever as Philipson. Oh! Jane, I wish I had passed——"

"Do you fancy you know what would cure her?"

"I'd try. You know, Jane, I love Lettie. I meant to ask her to be my wife. I did ask her this afternoon, and she said, No; and then told me about her sight—it is only that. I know she likes me: indeed, she did not try to deny it."

"Yes, Harry, you have been so much together; but there must be no talk of marrying."

"That is what she says."

"She is right—she must just stay with me. You could not do with a blind wife, Harry: you, a young man, with your way to make in the world."

He tore up a handful of grass, and flung it upon the river, saying passionately, "Why, of all the girls in Dalston must this affliction fall on poor Lettie?" and then he got up and walked away to meet her coming along the bank. They had a good deal of talk together, which I did not listen to; for their young hearts were speaking to each other—telling their secrets. Lettie loved him: yes, certainly she loved him.

III.

DOCTOR PHILIPSON's opinion was the same as that of Doctor Nash. Lettie was not so down-stricken as I had dreaded she would be, and she bade good-bye to Harry Crofts almost cheerfully when he went up to London.

"There, Jane, now I hope he'll forget me," she said to me; "I don't like to see him so dull."

That day Mrs. Davis sent her a ticket for a concert at the Blind Institution, and she went. When she came home to tea she told me that the girls and boys who sang looked quite happy and contented. "And why should I not be so too? what a number of beautiful sights I can remember which some of them never saw!" she added, with a sigh.

After this, imperceptibly, her sight went; until I noticed that, even in crossing the floor, she felt her way before her, with her hands out. Doctor Nash again offered to use his influence to get her admitted into the Institution, but she always pleaded "Let me stay with you, Janey!" and I had not the heart to refuse; though she would have had more advantages there, than I could afford her.

Not far from us there lived an old German clockmaker, who was besides musical, and acted as organist at the Roman Catholic Chapel in the town. We had known him all our lives. Lettie often carried him a posy from our garden, and his grandchildren came to me for patches to dress their dolls. Müller was a grim fantastic-looking figure, but he had a heart of pure gold. He was benevolent, simple, kindly; it was his talk that had reconciled Lettie, more than anything else to her condition. He was so poor, yet so satisfied; so afflicted, yet unrepining.

"Learn music—I will teach thee," he said to my sister. So, sometimes in our little parlour, and sometimes in his, he gave her lessons in fine sacred pieces from Handel and Haydn, and taught her to sing as they sing in churches—which was grander than our simple Methodist hymns. It was a great delight to listen to her. It seemed as if she felt everything deeper in her heart, and expressed it better than before: and it was all her consolation to draw the sweet sounds up out of that well of feeling which love had sounded. I know that, to remember how Harry loved her, gave a tenderness and patience to her suffering which it would else have lacked. She, who used to be so quick with her tongue, never gave anybody a sharp word now.

I do not say much about our being poor, though, of course, that could not but be; still we had friends who were kind to us: even Mrs. Davis softened, and mentioned to me, under seal of confidence, that, if I could not quite make up the rent, she would not press me; but I fortunately had not to claim her forbearance, or else I do fear she could not have borne to lose a sixpence; and when it had come to the point we should have had to go like others: she was so very fond of money, poor woman! Lettie used to go to the Institution sometimes, where she learnt to knit, and net, and weave basket-work. Our rector (a better man never lived, or a kinder to the poor) had her to net covers for his fruit-trees, fishing-nets, and other things; and to knit woollen socks for himself and his boys; so that altogether she contrived to make what almost kept her. Now that the calamity had really come, it was not half so dreadful as it had seemed a long way off. Lettie was mostly cheerful. I never heard her complain, but she used to say, often, that there was much to be thankful for with us. She had a quiet religious feeling, which kept her from melancholy; and, though I did not find it out until afterwards, a hope that perhaps her

affliction might some day be removed. Harry had put that thought into her mind, and I do not think I am overstating the truth in saying that his honest, manly affection for her was the great motive to his working so hard at his profession, in which he has since become deservedly successful and famous.

We had six very quiet years. It seemed to me as if Lettie had always, from the first, gone softly groping her way, and I had always led her to chapel and back. Harry studied in London; then we heard of him in Edinburgh; and at last his mother said he had gone to Paris; and she was half afraid he would settle there and marry a papist wife. Lettie looked sorrowful and restless for a day or two after that, but presently recovered her cheerfulness. We had not much change or variety at home. There was I for ever at my work, and Lettie at her music. She had gained a great deal of skill now; and many a time have I seen a knot of people standing at the corner of our garden hedge to listen to her singing. I have heard several grand public performers since then; but never one who could touch my heart and bring the tears into my eyes as my poor blind sister did. On Sundays, at chapel, we could hear her voice, clear and sweet, above all the rest; and, though our tunes were wild and simple—sung by her, they were beautiful. Sometimes she would go to St. John's church for the sake of the organ and the chaunting, but I did not feel it right to change: habit is strong in slow, untaught people; and it did not seem as if I had kept my Sabbath, unless I said my prayers in the homely little chapel to which our mother had led us by the hand when we were children. Lettie loved the grand church music, and who could wonder at it, poor lassie? Once or twice when she begged me to go with her, it had seemed to fill my heart to pain almost; so how much more must it have excited her who was all fire and enthusiasm! She said it made her feel happier and better, and more thankful to God. Perhaps in losing one sense, her enjoyment through the others grew more intense.

IV.

At the end of these six years Harry Crofts came home. He was often at our house, and we liked having him; but, though Lettie seemed happy enough, he was uneasy and discontented. I have seen him stand beside the piano, and never take his eyes off her by the half-hour together; but his face looked quite gloomy. At last he one day said to me, "Jane, are you timid—I do not think Lettie is? She seems strong and well." I knew he meant more than a simple inquiry after our nerves, and I asked if he thought he had found out a cure for my sister. He turned quite red.

"Yes; I believe I have. I saw an ope-

ration performed in Paris on a girl's eyes similarly affected. It was successful."

I said not a word. The prospect seemed too good, too beautiful to be true! Just at this minute Lettie came in through the doorway; there was sunshine behind her, and she appeared to bring it into the parlour with her. "Are you here, Harry?" she immediately asked.

It was a strange thing, that, although she neither saw him nor heard him speak, she was at once aware of his presence. He got up and took her by the hand, and brought her to me. "Tell her, Jane, or shall I?" he whispered. I signed to him to speak himself, which he did without hesitation.

"Lettie, have you courage to undergo an operation on your eyes which may restore your sight?"

She clasped her hands, and such a beautiful colour came flushing up into her face—you would have said it was like an angel's face, it changed so brightly.

"Oh, yes! anything, anything, Harry, only give me that hope!" said she, softly.

I looked at him questioningly to ask if he had not better warn her of possible disappointment, and he said at once:

"Lettie, I ought to tell you that this operation may fail, though I do not fear that it will. For my sake, Lettie," he added, in an undertone.

"Well, then, for your sake, Harry," she replied, with a low sigh. "Even if it should not give me back my sight, I shall only be as I am now."

They went out into the garden together; and, from the earnest, gentle way in which Harry talked to Lettie, I know that he was preparing her for what she had to undergo. She did not want for courage in any circumstances, and I did not look for her being weak now.

The operation was performed during the following week. Doctor Philipson and Doctor Nash were both present, but Harry Crofts himself did it. His nerve was wonderful. Lettie behaved admirably too; indeed, nobody was foolish but myself, and when it was over I fainted. It was entirely successful; my sister has her sight, now, as good as I have. For several weeks we kept her in a darkened room, but she was gradually permitted to face the light, and the joy of that time is more than words can describe.

Harry Crofts soon after claimed her as his wife; and really, to say the truth, nobody had a better right to her. The report of the singular cure he had made, lifted him at once into consideration; and, as he made diseases of the eye his particular study, he is now as celebrated an oculist as Doctor Philipson himself; many persons indeed give him the preference. The operation, then thought so much of, is now of frequent occurrence; Lettie's kind of blindness being no longer looked on as irremediable.

And this is all I need tell about our

history; it is not much, or very romantic, but I am often asked about it, so I have just set down the truth.

MONEYSWORTH.

MONEY is an object which enters, more or less, into most people's calculations: honest money, if possible—good, that is not bad money, of course; but in other respects, what sort of money, is a matter of pure indifference, or fancy. Golden guineas, silver dollars, copper pence, or brass farthings, are singly and collectively welcomed with smiles, as helping to make up a sum required, or to meet a little bill at a certain date. Such is the way of the world in general. So it be but money, honest and good, few persons are fastidious about its form and material. It would savour of being more nice than wise. But—to take a lesson from my honoured fellow-labourer in his article *Why?*—every schoolboy does not know that, at this moment, secret conclaves and conspiracies are being held, at home and abroad, whose object is to bring money into some sort of discipline and regularity. Odd money, they grant, is better than no cash at all; a dozen sacks of cowries, and a gross of strings of glass beads, are preferable, they allow, to so many empty bags and an equal number of unadorned strings; but still they venture to entertain the opinion that a little uniformity and agreement in respect to money will help the cause of civilisation, and promote good understanding between different nations. Short reckonings make long friends. Plain and easy reckonings are shorter than difficult and intricate reckonings. Therefore, the monetary reformers of the day are powerful strengtheners of international friendship.

But, before the money-manufacturer, the state, can go to work upon its job of coining, it must first crack, swallow, and digest a couple of rather tough-shelled nuts. The first, What shall be the representative value? the second, What shall constitute the primary element of that value?

Nut the first has been already disposed of, in two irreconcilably different ways, by England and France, and by the nations which have followed their respective examples. Gold is *our* representative, our actual circulating medium; silver and copper are only helps, to prevent poor folk from being cheated of the fractional quantities which fall to their due. Beyond a fixed and low amount, shillings and pence are not a lawful payment if the creditor chooses to object to receive them. He can make his debtor give him gold, or its equivalent, Bank of England notes.

In France, silver is the representative of value, the base of the monetary system there, as laid down by the law—which establishes the chartered rights of silver—of the seventh of Germinal of the year eleven; which enacts that Five grammes of silver of the standard of nine-tenths fine, constitutes the

MONETARY UNIT, which retains the name of FRANC. Consequently, in France, the change, the subsidiary coinage, is composed of the metals gold and copper. The former helps the rich man to pack the legal money, silver, into a smaller space, and to carry it about with greater ease; the latter, just like coppers with us, serves for the payment of persons and things whose claim or whose value is only a fraction of the national monetary unit. Large, heavy five-franc pieces, five of which make an English sovereign (approximately, according to the rate of exchange), are the legal tender; and in them, until very lately, by far the greater proportion of payments, even of heavy sums, were made. People engaged in a large way of business had need of a stud of money-wheel-barrows; they mostly managed with human barrows, on legs. You went to the bank to change an English note; and, while you were disposing of your ponderous cargo in small sacks, to balance equally in your right and left pockets, to avoid luffing too much on one side as you walked through the streets—in came a respectable, steady man (with the gait of an acrobat carrying half-a-dozen others), who wiped the perspiration from his brow as he took off his casquette, and then eased a sack of five-franc pieces from one shoulder, and then slipped another sack from the other, and then unbuckled a leather belt full of silver round his waist from under his blouse, and then disengaged another loaded belt or two traversing his chest diagonally, sashwise, till you felt relieved, and took breath as thankfully as the money-carrier himself. Talk of the burden of a heavy conscience! Did you ever feel the burden of five-franc pieces? Did you ever break down in a public vehicle from the effects of a sudden flush of specie belonging to the passengers, who were all carrying home their quarter's incomes or salaries on the same day of the month? Did you ever sprain your back severely, and be obliged to have it rubbed with hartshorn and oil, in consequence of over-taxing your strength in your hurry to pay all your Christmas bills at once?

Between France, then, and England there is a wide discrepancy in pecuniary matters, both material and theoretical. Our legal coin is gold, except for small sums; theirs is silver, even for the largest. You might be compelled to receive a legacy of a million of francs, in francs. How long that would take to count, you can calculate. Again, our money accounts are made out by means of a complicated application of the numbers four, twelve, and twenty, in order to sum up coins of four recognised denominations; while the French have only two to manage by the simple processes of decimal arithmetic.

A mutual reform is in the course of negotiation, as every schoolboy does not know. The French are advised to desecrate and

repeal their hallowed law of the year eleven, by demonetising silver, and adopting gold as the base of their currency. In return for this concession—which would prove immensely convenient to the conceders themselves, now that it is possible—England is urged to adopt a monetary system identical with that of her ally, as the first grand step towards a uniformity of weights, measures, and coins, over the whole face of the globe.

It is only since the last eight years that the step has been possible to France. Before that epoch, her gold had been drained away, simply because the legislature for the last two centuries had fixed the price of gold below its commercial value. Consequently it answered the purpose of neighbouring nations to import all the French gold coin they could entice within their boundaries. Gold went out of France faster than it came in. But now the change is possible. The discovery of the Australian and Californian mines, and demonetisation of gold in Belgium and Holland, have caused its value in the European market to drop to the degree which permits its remaining in the land of departments. Less silver has been coined and more gold. A large amount of golden twenty, ten, and five-franc pieces have been put into circulation. In spite of the late metallic crisis, gold circulates in greater abundance than silver. The bank effects its payments in gold. The monetary administration of France is therefore, in reality, completely changed. Formerly, silver coin was the basis of the circulation; there were only a hundred million francs in gold to three thousand million francs in silver. Now gold has obtained the preponderance. From a comparative table of the quantities of gold and silver coined by the principal countries in the world, from 'forty-eight to 'fifty-three, it appears that the United States of America take the lead, England and France are bracketted equal seconds, Austria stands third, and Spain, once so rich in gold coin, comes last. Doubtless the one thousand one hundred and eighty-seven millions francs' worth of gold coined in France since 'forty-eight have not stopped at home. A good deal has started on foreign travel; but the greater half has remained in the country. The proof is the altered modes in which the payments are made. Fifty per cent. in gold, thirty in silver, and twenty in bank notes (the proportion now), is a wonderful alteration from what used to take place ten years since. In short, gold has got the upper hand. The golden age has returned once more, to the great advantage of the coiners, the payers, and the receivers of money.

For, in the first place, gold makes cheaper coin than silver. The expense of fabricating gold is only one-fourth of the cost of making silver coin. Moreover, the wear and tear of gold is much less rapid and much less considerable than that of silver. On the much

greater convenience of carrying, and the immensely-increased rapidity of paying in, golden specie, half a word is sufficient. It may be assumed, therefore, that France, now, will make but little difficulty in agreeing with England in assimilating the basis of her metallic currency to ours. That step once adopted, and decimal moneys, weights, and measures established in Great Britain, the two countries, although not exactly travelling in the very same commercial track, would still be moving along a couple of exactly parallel roads, which would render business transactions between them infinitely easier than they are at present. The grand question still remains, whether it would be expedient, or even possible, to render the two currencies of England and France completely identical.

An opinion has already been ventured in this journal that measures of length, capacity (liquid and dry), and weight, founded on the French mètre (or ten-millionth part of the quadrant of the earth's meridian), are well adapted for universal use over the whole face of the habitable globe, because they are founded on natural and unvarying standards. Everywhere the length of the meridian and the weight of freezing water at the level of the sea are the same. If we employ weights and measures taken from such data as those, we can find and test them again at any time by the same means and calculations as we found them at first. This is a very great advantage; there is no more room for disputing about weights and measures so determined than there is for discussing whether the sun shines at noon, or whether the moon is in the wane or crescent. The learned men entrusted with the task of working out the metrical system, have, so far, perfectly fulfilled their mission. But they endeavoured to advance a step further, and have failed. They endeavoured to create a Unit of Value, by applying a multiple of the unit of weight to the metallic merchandise commonly called silver. But, as has been stated in a former article, the unit of weight deduced from the mètre can no more fix the value of silver or gold than it can arrest the variations of human caprice and human productiveness, on which all ideas respecting value depend. Value, from the dawn of history to the present time, has been an arbitrary and conventional thing; an article is worth just what it will fetch. The gold and silver materials of which we make our money-counters, change their value from week to week, and have different values in different countries. Bullion gold is dearer in England than in Australia, while coined gold is dearer there than at home. The franc is the unit of French money accounts, and the sovereign of English, simply because they were found to suit each country best, not because either is a unit of value in either country. But if our philosophic dons could

contrive to find any natural, cosmopolitan, indisputable unit of value, whose fixity every one must admit as freely as the length of the meridian or the weight of water at a given temperature, such a unit would be applicable and common not only to England and France, but to every country between the equator and the poles; and then, and not before, we could have a uniform and universal currency all the world over. You might walk into a shop in some Chinese Regent Street, or Boulevards des Italiens, and tender the same denomination of cash, and receive the same denomination of change, as you would in Cheapside. Let us try, then, if we can catch the unit of value, bring him home prisoner, and put him to task-work to grind in a money-mill, like a captive Samson.

At once let us boldly make up our minds to the fact that there is no relationship or connection whatever between the franc, or the sovereign, and the terrestrial meridian, or any other standard of the kind that can be mentioned. The savans who composed the commission of the year eleven, would not have made such a blunder had a single member of their learned body been a disciple of Turgot, or of Adam Smith. Their only excuse is their earnest desire to introduce the same precision in the measure of value as they had in the measures of length, weight, and capacity. Clearly, the law of the year eleven was inspired by prejudice and the spirit of system and uniformity; and those are the corks which still buoy it up, and prevent it from sinking. Learned men now and then condescend to flatter the errors of the commonalty. Moreover, those reformers had scarcely a choice allowed them; do it they must: it was compulsory, on pain of guillotine, to apply the metrical system, right or wrong, to everything. But Adam Smith was the first to lay down the axiom, now universally admitted by political economists, that LABOUR is the primitive money, by means of which everything is purchased; and that he who wishes for the legal possession of any object offered for sale, is obliged to yield in exchange for it a quantity of labour equivalent to that required to produce the object. In other words, Labour is the measure of Value; by it, all things are produced and acquired; and from it, things receive their exchangeable value.

From time immemorial, the monetary unit has been a certain weight of metal. Even now, it is the popular belief that there exist in nature special productions, gold and silver, and also gems, whose value is fixed and inviolable. Experience proves the contrary; it demonstrates that gold and silver, like all other products, are subject to changes and oscillations which, even though unfrequent, are not the less appreciable. The precious metals, which constitute the material of coin, are subject to the law of labour. Their brilliancy, density, inalterability; their extreme

divisibility, their power of compressing a large amount of value into a small volume, have doubtless contributed to their being accepted as the instrument of exchange; but, what establishes their value, is neither their metallic material nor its inherent qualities, but, as economists unanimously declare, the labour without which they cannot be obtained. The mines of Potosi formerly occasioned a great depression in the value of silver, because the quantities of labour—the sum of the efforts and sacrifices of all kinds—required to extract a pound of silver there, was less than the corresponding amount in any other mine. In Ricardo's words, "the cost of production" was less, at the same time that the production was on a more extended scale. This is the true sense in which to understand the words, "The mine of Potosi was a very rich mine." The same conditions are now fulfilled, in respect to gold, by the mines of California and Australia. When, therefore, it was requisite to calculate and discover what ought to be the monetary unit, the philosophers charged with that arduous task ought to have proposed to themselves something more than to fix the relation between the weight of coins and the metrical unit; they ought to have determined what amount of labour should enter into the monetary unit which they proposed to adopt. In one word; at the same time that they established the material standard, they ought to have established the labour standard.

It follows, that an equitable monetary law should no longer take for its base a certain weight either of silver or of gold, but must adopt the only true and actual value—that which serves as the basis and measure of all other values—labour, measured by time. In reality, the relations of human labour have reference to time, and not to space. "Time is money," says the proverb, more truly and more philosophically than may be suspected at first sight. If that element of value is incorporated in a certain weight of gold, silver, or copper, the proceeding is only rational, and in the majority of cases very convenient. But it should not be forgotten that it is the labour which constitutes the value, and not the material with which it is incorporated. The idea of substituting a labour-standard for a metallic standard has made a profound impression on many thoughtful observers. Indeed, such a substitution would seem to be the natural consequence of the adoption of paper money. It would be the realisation of Turgot's maxim: All merchandise has the two essential properties of money; namely, it measures, and also represents, all values; and in this sense, all merchandise is money. The new standard would consequently borrow its divisions and its multiples from the measures of time. For instance, to take a division proposed by M. de Girardin, the minute of labour would repre-

sent a centime ; the hour of labour sixty centimes ; the day, consisting of ten hours of labour, would represent six francs. It is even suggested that in a society founded on labour and exchange, there would be nothing strange in taking, instead of a franc as a measure of the value of things, an hour of labour equivalent to sixty centimes ; and to say of an article worth sixty francs that it is worth a hundred hours, or ten days of labour.

Without pursuing the projected innovation further, thus much may be remarked. If the unit of value is to be the unit of labour (however we may express it, or in whatever shape we may put it), it is composed of two combined elements,—time, and the workman's maintenance. The latter element varies immensely. In a country where people live mainly on vegetables, require but little fire and clothing, and lodge for next to nothing, as within the tropics, the unit of labour must ever stand at a lower figure than in London or Paris, where rent, cooking, and dress are dear. The artisan must be kept alive and in reasonable strength ; for, without him, there are no results of labour ; but the cost of keeping him in that state, and of maintaining his animal machinery in working condition, will not be uniform, even in the same county or department. A universal unit of value cannot be fixed ; because the value of provisions and of time varies over the whole superficies of the globe, and fluctuates in each particular spot. Consequently, there appears good reason for adhering to the proposition that, while adopting the *mètre* as the foundation of our measures and weights, we are not thereby compelled to adopt the franc, which is inapplicable to us as a unit of value. If the French will adopt gold as the basis of their currency, and we a decimal coinage with the sovereign as our integer, then, with metrical weights and measures common to both, our commercial interchanges will go on smoothly and easily, like well-regulated chronometers which differ in their rate of going, but which agree, all the same for that, in the longitude they indicate.

PUTTERS DOWN.

THE faculty of making people know their places—of silencing them by ridicule, sarcasm, or civil contempt—of putting them down, as it is called—may, no doubt, be exercised lawfully, sometimes meritoriously. There are impertinent, presuming, mischievous people in the world whom, as a last resource, it may be necessary to put down. More rarely, there are shameless, loud-tongued traducers of whatever is sacred or kindly in our nature—men deaf to reasoning, because they ignore those moral instincts on which reasoning is founded—whom it may be virtuous to put down. Let it be understood that I have no fault to find with him who reluctantly uses

the keen weapon of the tongue to abate an annoyance or an impiety.

But I do confess that if there be one character more than another that rouses my usually bland temper into combativeness, it is the character of the putter-down upon system. In his atmosphere of forked lightning and thunder my milk of human kindness naturally curdles. If he be a complete master of fence, I dislike him all the more. I have a prejudice against duellists in general, but I feel positive aversion to him who is profuse in his challenges because he never misses his man. The professed putter-down—if urged by the love of display—is ungenerous ; if by the love of combativeness—is ungenial ; if by the love of causing pain—is cowardly. The last is the bravo of society.

The most resolute putter-down I ever met was Dion Dixit, Esq., one of her Majesty's counsel. He was the representative in the direct line of the famous Ipse Dixit, whose scions have so often intermixed with some of our most intellectual families. Dion Dixit, Q.C., was by no means the most unfavourable type of the genus putter-down. He had, at the time I speak of, been some years a widower. In person he was handsome, of commanding height, and well-proportioned. His features, though large, were regular and classical. He had a florid complexion, spite of the midnight oil at Lincoln's Inn ; an expression which would have been pompous and stolid, but for a keen and flexible lip and eyebrows of uncommon mobility. Imperious or sardonic when opposed, I have known him at other times to be good-humoured and even gracious. Tart and curt, even to ladies, if they doubted his infallibility, he more frequently wore towards them an air of playful toleration. He was artist enough to know that this gentle deportment towards the fair relieved and threw out that imposing attitude which he presented to his own sex. He was shrewd and quick, tolerably well read, and accustomed to society. He had become a putter-down from a sense of self-importance, and from a love of power—qualities which his profession had unduly fostered—rather than from any absolute scorn or malice in his disposition.

I first met Mr. Dixit at a water-cure establishment in the west of England. What disorder had originally brought him to that sanitary retreat I never knew ; but it is certain that on my arrival there he might have served as a living advertisement for hydropathic therapeutics. I was then at a loss to know what motive could detain so robust a gentleman in a company of invalids.

I reached Langham Park at a late hour, and after a cup of tea in Doctor Mason's private library, retired to my room. I duly underwent the ordeal of the two inquisitors who roused me at dawn, swathed me with chilling appliances of water, and then, by merciless friction, suggested the presence of a

still more ruthless element. I had compressed into half an hour the opposite tortures of Dante's Inferno, and—still undecided as to whether ice or fire were the more potent demon—I took my preliminary walk, and returned to breakfast. I was then ushered into the public room, and found myself in the society of my fellow victims and of Dixit, Q.C.

Mr. Dixit, in his sonorous and declamatory manner, was inveighing against the English climate when I entered. He addressed himself to no one in particular, but was engaged in putting down the sun for making its appearance in these regions, and for supposing that it shone.

Judging from the buzz of applause which followed Mr. Dixit's sally, one might have supposed that the sun had actually slunk away, very much ashamed of himself. Lady Ursula Price—a tall, thin, keen, privileged person, who took her chocolate in front of the fire, and acted as a screen to the rest of the company—tapped applause on the fender with an unexceptionable brodequin. The two Misses Silversley—who looked very much like Naiads that had not yet come out—telegraphed applause to Silversley père in a giggle; Silversley père—a bald gentleman with an expression of bland fatuity—interjected, "Ha, ha, good!" whereupon another Silversley—*ils et* frère*, twenty-five and blasé—expended the relics of his enthusiasm in the ejaculation "prime!"

I was sufficiently ignorant and daring to dissent from Mr. Dixit's opinion, and to suppose that I might do so upon terms of social equality. "I fancy there is a charm, after all," I said, "in the captiousness and variety of our English skies. Look at their agreeable surprises, the soft, smiling days that come upon you in February like unexpected friends, the chequered lights of half-clouded summer noons, so preferable to unmitigated glare."

When I paused there was a dead silence. I was the focus of every eye in the room. Mr. Dixit, who had recurred to the Times, which he was reading through his glass, quietly directed that instrument towards me, and surveyed me as if I had been a curiosity in a museum. Finding, I suppose, nothing to repay his investigation, he withdrew it, and said, "The House was counted out last night on the Malt Tax, Lady Ursula."

But I was not yet abashed. I detected in the face of a young lady opposite to me a sort of good-natured interest, and addressed myself to her. I hoped she was patriotic enough to come to the defence of our climate.

"What! After Mr. Dixit's condemnation?" she replied, archly.

"On account of it," I said.

She looked at me with an expression both of amusement and pity. "Do you seriously mean that you would enter the lists with Mr. Dixit?"

I was about to rejoin, but at this crisis the

awful voice of the putter-down hushed every other.

"I will relieve this gentleman of all doubt on that point, Miss Martindale. There must be two parties to such an encounter, and I am as little likely to accept the challenge of your new acquaintance as to send him mine. Apropos of weather, though, Miss Martindale"—here he tempered his majesty to the capacity of feminine eyes, and became playful—"what a day for sketching. Did you see Miss Martindale's last sketch of Barnwood Abbey, Lady Ursula? Quite charming! If she will indeed tilt with me in defence of England, her best lance would be her pencil."

I could not but admire the art with which Mr. Dixit had managed to insult me without using one word that I could easily resent. Even the repartee I meditated was foiled in advance. Lady Ursula's grin of satisfaction at my chastisement, and the light laugh of the company, Miss Martindale excepted, had scarcely ceased, when the Q.C. had glided into another subject, and made retort impossible. For myself, I own to having been annoyed. I resolved, as the most dignified mark of my displeasure, quietly to ignore Mr. Dixit during my stay at Langham Park.

I was not long in detecting, by the playful wiles of Lady Ursula towards the putter-down, that he was an object to her either of wholesome fear or of sentimental admiration. The former had perhaps issued from the latter, for Lady Ursula was just the person to confound arrogance with superiority. I observed, too, unguarded moments when she could not restrain her quick acerbity of tone even when addressing Mr. Dixit. As these occasions generally occurred after that gentleman had indulged in too long or too bland conversation with Miss Martindale, I further surmised that she was perhaps the inconvenient bit of rock in Lady Ursula's current of true love which prevented that shallow stream from running quite smoothly. And, indeed, her jealousy (if she were jealous) was not unreasonable. In the first place, the relic of the late Sir Josiah Price, M.D., was decidedly sloping down from that meridian of beauty to which Miss Martindale was attaining. Again, the latter—though looking somewhat delicate from recent indisposition—had at once a sprightliness of fancy, and a composure of manner, which both won and secured your interest. She was, in fact, one of those rare persons in whom there is always something to discover. When I add to such charms those of an intelligent and pleasing face, a graceful and elastic carriage, and a bachelor uncle whose fabulous wealth was evidently destined for his niece, you may infer that Lady Ursula had tolerable grounds for apprehension.

I had resided at Langham Park for a month. New comers of the most various characters and classes had arrived in that

period; all of them, however, identified in their common experience of Mr. Dixit. Country gentlemen, the oracles of their districts, had been laughed down on questions of soil, crops, Herefords, and short-horns. Oxford men, worn-out by being chained to the oar of regatta-clubs, had been looked down by the interrogative contempt of Mr. Dixit's glass. Jaded wilful beauties, accustomed to their own way, were compassionately smiled down when they insisted on that privilege with Mr. Dixit. Sometimes he had a way of putting them down by concession—of presenting them with a right to their own thoughts, as if their minds were teething, and might be diverted by a coral.

I persevered in my resolution to avoid this gentleman without any marked result upon his health or spirits. My intention was, however, perceived by Lady Ursula, who directed frequent sarcasms against me in consequence, and produced a general impression upon our circle, that cordiality to me was a tacit affront to Mr. Dixit. The Doctor, arch inscrutable Miss Martindale, and her uncle, Mr. Clevedon—rather a guest than a patient—were alone bold enough to maintain kindly relations with me. The lady—whom I daily found more and more captivating—was in general request, and the doctor had many duties; so that I enjoyed but little of their society. Mr. Clevedon, who could be more liberal of his attentions, was a worthy but formal and prosy country gentleman of the old school. His chief topic was the pedigrees and relative standings of three old families—his neighbours—in Herefordshire. He would tell you how the first Sir Ralph Rooke was summoned to parliament in the reign of King Stephen; how the present Lord Racket Rooke inherited collaterally from the original Baron; how Tudor Manor had been confiscated by the parliament in the Civil War and given to the Woodhams; and how the Woodhams persisted in maintaining the armorial bearings of the Tudors over the gateway, and taking credit for the two supporting griffins—whereas no Woodham was ever entitled to any property in those distinguished animals; how a Prince of the Blood passing on to Wales—in order to mark his displeasure at the fraudulent appropriation of the griffins—had accepted the hospitality of Tudor Lodge rather than that of Woodham Hall; and how he (Mr. Clevedon), out of respect to the Tudors, had waived his own claim to the royal guest. The good old gentleman was Miss Martindale's uncle! but still I was bored. I longed for a new interest.

It came just before I reached that resigned torpor, that fossil state of ennui into which my baffled desires were fast hardening. In front of the house there was a terrace on which most of us used to promenade for an hour before luncheon. On these occasions the satellites of Mr. Dixit were wont to

cluster round their intellectual centre, and to bask in his brilliancy.

In the outermost ring of this group I observed one day the Doctor standing arm-in-arm with a tall middle-aged man, who was evidently the latest arrival. So extraordinary were the appearance and manners of the new patient, that we indulged him, I fear, with a more frequent scrutiny than quite tallied with good breeding. His long unkempt light hair—which streamed irregularly down his shoulders—was surmounted by a small, conical, and narrow-brimmed hat. The hat itself swerved from his turbulent locks like a child rider who with inadequate knees fails to bestride his steed, and clings therefore to his neck. The head which was thus enveloped and adorned, presented, so far as we could judge, a full and ample brow; but I would have defied any one to say on a first inspection what was the character of the eyes. Now they dilated, now they blinked; now they pierced you with keen inquiry, anon they seemed as if all their light had gone inward. They appeared to preside over the muscles and limbs like the leader of an orchestra over his troupe. The mouth alternately compressed and twitching; and the arms, one moment rigid, the next galvanically active, fully corresponded to the ever-varying optics.

Mr. Dixit was declaiming against the absurd doctrine that the sale of military commissions should be discontinued, and that soldiers should be promoted according to merit and seniority. "Such a proposal is ridiculous," said he. "You must have gentlemen for your officers; and a man who has risen by merit seldom feels at home in the company of gentlemen."

"I admit that sometimes the two classes have little in common," said Miss Martindale with her quiet smile.

"Mr. Dixit always puts things so practically," cried Lady Ursula.

"So very practically," chimed a dozen voices.

"Pardon me—excuse me—I—I—don't altogether—that is—I beg to differ—"

Who is that? was the thought of all. I do not think that such words, however blandly pronounced, could have fallen on our circle without producing much the same effect as a thunderbolt. But jerked out as they were, accompanied by an ardent glance, and a series of emphatic gestures, the result was appalling. What was to be done with the new patient? for he was the delinquent. When Mr. Dixit thought proper to terminate that terrible silence, how would he deal with him? Was the offender a madman? There was some ground for that hypothesis, for when the company called the idol practical he had "begged to differ!" But if Mr. Clayton were insane would the Doctor have introduced him in public? No; that plea was unavailing. Could he be found guilty

under extenuating circumstances? Alas, there had been no provocation given! No one had addressed him. It was far from the sole impulse of his native depravity, that when homage was voted to Dixit—carried as it were by acclamation—this unhappy man had “begged to differ.”

In this case society had been too deeply convulsed for Mr. Dixit to ignore the culprit. Calmly, as one who feels a crisis, but feels also that he is equal to it, our oracle transfixed Clayton with his eye, and observed, “You beg to differ, sir,” you say, “from this company. I have not the slightest doubt that this company will be resigned to your doing so.”

Then arose that short quick compound of a laugh and a cough which Lady Ursula meant for applause. Then arose that general hum of admiration which was sure to greet the discomfiture of Mr. Dixit’s victims. Miss Martindale alone, who walked somewhat apart, was grave and silent.

But when the applause had subsided, she said, “I really did not catch Mr. Clayton’s words. It might sometimes be interesting to hear a new view.”

“Not if it were an absurdity,” replied Sir Josiah’s relict in a whisper that feigned to be confidential but was heard by every one.

“An absurdity, madam!” ejaculated Clayton himself. “Well it was my—my—it was my opinion.”

“Confine yourself to the terms of the agreement,” laughed the putter-down carelessly. “Lady Ursula demurred to the quality of the opinion—not to your property in it.”

It is wonderful what some men may do. I thought this remark sheer ill-bred insolence. But my companions—Miss Martindale again excepted—gave it all the honours of polished wit. Mr. Clayton drew himself erect and turned on his assailant a look of dignified surprise. He seemed about to speak; but I suppose words were not ready. In another minute he relapsed into his strange contortions of face and galvanic gestures, and darted abruptly into the house.

Dr. Mason then told us with a grave look, almost amounting to reproof, that long and intense study had strained the nerves of his patient, that—buried in darling abstractions, his mind had become introverted and lost its calm healthy relations to the body. Agreeable society—added the physician—might do much for the case. The society of those who would be tolerant to a scholar’s eccentricities from respect to their cause.

This hint was not altogether lost. Let me in candour state that for two or three days Mr. Dixit and his suite were not only forbearing but kind to the nervous invalid. Unhappily, however, the latter could not always hold his tongue. When certain topics were discussed he grew excited and ex-

pressed a quick and incoherent dissent from our law-giver. At first that gentleman would make a solemn pause and give a warning look to remind Clayton in whose presence he sat. But as these manoeuvres only provoked a more audacious resistance, Mr. Dixit evidently felt at last that lenity could be carried no further, and that the system of putting-down must again be resorted to. Accordingly all the engines of that system were gradually brought into play—quiet raillery, keen sarcasm, curt decision, and a gaze of disdainful wonder, such as the Great Mogul might give to the fly that had settled on his nose.

I never saw a more unequal combat. Clayton was only too willing to argue. He would begin vehement sentences that lost themselves in mazes of parenthesis and never found their way out. He would attempt to prop his dislocated meaning with unwieldy crutches of gesture which tripped it up completely. His guns kicked and shook his own crazy fort—a structure which tottered to pieces at the very sound of his enemy’s well-served and brilliant fire.

Miss Martindale no longer concealed her annoyance at these attacks. Her bearing became even deferential to Clayton, coldly civil to Mr. Dixit. Perhaps she instinctively knew the former better than the rest did. He talked almost coherently when she led the conversation, and sometimes there were glimpses both in his thoughts and movements of a grace strangely contrasting with his habitual awkwardness.

Good-natured Mr. Clevedon and myself, too, found the poor victim conversable enough when his persecutors were absent. We made a trio one evening towards twilight, and our talk chanced upon education. Mr. Clevedon had possessed us of the important fact that all the Tudors for the last three generations had been educated at Oxford. Somehow we diverged from this starting-point to a more general discussion, with a rapidity which I dare say somewhat scandalised Miss Martindale’s uncle. “Education,” insisted Clayton with unwonted clearness “is too often confounded with instruction. Education, as its root, educere, shows, is to lead out—to lead out, to develop our faculties. Instruction relates to the knowledge which we acquire. And rely upon it unless our capacities are first led out or educated we shall make but a sorry use of instruction. We must live before we can learn, for—that is—I mean we must be beings before we can—you know what I mean.”

“Yes,” said Miss Martindale, who had entered unperceived, “I quite agree with you. It is curious, by the way, how your views agree with those of a writer in the — Review.” She handed to Clayton a well-known Quarterly, open at the page which she had been reading. “The paper is

well worth your perusal," Miss Martindale continued, "not only learned and eloquent, but high-toned and original, so earnest, too, that the writer has quite forgotten himself in his subject—a rare charm in writing—at least to me." There was a certain soft earnestness in her own tone which—contrasted with her usual spirit and life—had a bewitching effect. Clayton made an irresolute clutch whether at the book, or at the fair hand that offered it seemed doubtful. The former, once in his possession, a gleam of pleasure lit up his face. Then he sat silent, his head propped on his hand.

I have no hope whatever that I could maintain a mystery against the acuteness of my readers. The anonymous article praised by Miss Martindale was—as I afterwards learned—written by Mr. Clayton himself. I fancied that from that time a confidential feeling sprang up between them. The lady, it is true, responded impartially as heretofore to all claims on her attention; but there were some chance minutes daily when she might be seen winding down the avenue, attended only by her uncle and the eccentric student.

It cannot be supposed that this toleration—even favour on the part of Miss Martindale—escaped the notice of the putter-down. He perceived it, I am sure, with indignation, and grew so relentless in his hostilities to the nervous sufferer, that I was heartily glad to learn from the Doctor that he had ordered Clayton to abstain from society for some days, and to pursue the hydropathic treatment in quiet.

Accordingly—although we had occasional glimpses of the lonely patient as he struck across the park after his douche, or bore down homeward from the breezy wolds—we met no more for several weeks. Dr. Mason was reserved in his answer to our inquiries. The most decisive bulletin we could get from him was that he thought now Mr. Clayton would do.

One morning, shortly after this, we had a large reinforcement of invalids. A supplementary table was placed in the breakfast room, and every seat was filled. For some days previously there had been a marked relaxation in the Dixit tyranny; because, I suppose, even despotism palls when constantly exercised over the same submissive victims. Our Cæsar had given us holiday while he strove to reinstate himself into the graces of Miss Martindale, or to appease the tender jealousy of Lady Ursula. But with the new comers he was himself again. His supremacy had again to be asserted: the barbarous, who had never heard of him, had to own his yoke. Accordingly, the number of persons was that day unusually large who learned their relative position to Mr. Dixit, and who were awed and astonished into silence. These results were not always gained without a struggle; but it was the futile struggle of the swimmer against the vortex.

"Don't tell me, sir, of the mitigation of the penal code of reformatory schools for juvenile delinquents and so-forth. A boy criminal is the worst of all criminals. He begins by being bad. Crime runs in his blood. Up with him—like a fungus."

This was launched by the dictator against a mild and persistent quaker, who, essaying to reply, found that his antagonist had seemingly forgotten his existence, and was deep in a flirtation with the lady next to him.

"I think what this gentleman urged deserves attention," said a calm clear voice which produced an instant hush; "that our only remedy for young offenders is to extirpate them, is a conclusion which at all events needs strong reasons."

Mr. Dixit's glass was in prompt requisition as he sought out the speaker from the herd of nobodies with an amused smile.

"Pardon me, I forgot you were short-sighted," said he of the voice, rising composedly and taking a seat just vacated and directly opposite to Mr. Dixit's. "Now, if you please, we can discuss the matter."

The transformation wrought by the water-cure had been so complete that we observed with wonder that calm smiling face, that port equally firm and courteous, that clear flexible voice, that hair, wavy but no longer wild—could all these indeed be attributes of the awkward, abrupt, grotesque being whom Dixit had expelled from his dominions?

And Clayton was now ready to discuss the matter, even with a Dixit. That gentleman—at first confounded—next bent his eyes upon Clayton, then turned them in mute appeal to the general company. With the same pantomime have I seen a phrenological lecturer point to a flat organ of veneration in the cast of one who in his lifetime had respected nothing in the earth or above it. At present, however, the spectators showed interest rather than horror. By her short, hysteric laugh, Lady Ursula evidently moved that Clayton should be forthwith convicted of impiety, but no one seconded the resolution.

Mr. Dixit thought it necessary to speak.

"Discussion," said he, "is a traffic, an interchange of ideas. I do not enter upon that kind of barter unless I am sure of an equivalent."

These words were uttered with slow scorn. The speaker was taking high ground, and such is the force of custom, a faint murmur of assent succeeded.

"A very just definition," replied Clayton. "It is one of the advantages of discussion that he who does not find his account in it may decline it. But dictation is a thing of another kind; it implies, not a commodity exchanged, but a tax imposed—in which case we may reasonably ask to look at the warrant."

The two wrestlers had entered the ring;

and Clayton had actually closed with his antagonist. The table sat with gaze rivetted on the combatants—only Miss Martindale looked down. Perhaps she had a stake in the result which she was unwilling to betray.

Mr. Dixit felt that now, if ever, he must shake off Clayton's gripe. The trial was not only one of skill, but of strength. He could not trip up this man; he would lift him from the ground, and throw him. "A dictator," he cried, "does not stoop to explain. He wields the power of a strong mind over a common one."

"But he must first prove himself strong. He must, at least, have his army and police, to put down question. If not, we may suspect him to be only a stage-king. And, even as a stage-king, he must know how to act majesty, otherwise we shall see at once that his diamonds are glass, and doubt if he have paid the supers who bear up his cotton velvet."

"This is insult!" exclaimed Dixit.

"No," rejoined the other. "If you be a real monarch, it does not apply to you; if a sham one, you made the application yourself."

"Ha! ha! ha!" from the table in general. Clapsed hands and eyes that apostrophised the ceiling, on the part of Lady Ursula.

"Sir!" shouted Dixit, forgetting all decorum in his excitement, "there are opinions that we do not answer, because they outrage us. Their safety lies not in their strength, but in their repulsiveness. They do not conquer, they disgust. Your pleas for crime were of this kind."

"My pleas for reforming criminals, you should say."

"The same thing, sir. I know what this spurious philanthropy comes to."

"Yes, yes," from Lady Ursula, her arms extended in wonder and delight.

"I know what it comes to," Dixit went on. "It means sympathy with wretches, and indifference to society. You would abolish hanging, I don't doubt?"

Clayton smiled.

"And trust, instead"—here Mr. Dixit's sneer was withering—"to education—to the gradual results of moral influence."

"Perhaps so."

"Ha! ha! ha!—you admit it! And, in the meantime—mark, gentlemen—in the meantime, I might be murdered!"

"Perhaps so; no great reform was ever effected without some trifling inconvenience at the beginning."

The roof did not fall in; the walls did not give way. If they shook, it was with the laughter of the audience.

Mr. Dixit had before resembled Coriolanus in putting down the mob. He was now disposed to emulate that illustrious Roman when driven into exile. He stood at bay with the revolvers. "I disdain alike, sir," said he, "your coarse effrontery and the taste

of your admirers. I beg to decline giving any further encouragement to either."

He spoke. I confess, I softened to the great man in his disgrace. He looked it in the face proudly. "I banish you!" was the thought visible to all, as he drew his coat around him. It was only a coat; but the action would have suited a toga. He turned; he strode away; he was gone!

A solemn pause.

"And this is what you have brought upon us!" burst forth Lady Ursula to Clayton. "On your account Mr. Dixit will withdraw himself from us all."

"Pardon me; I scarcely aspired to be a public benefactor," returned Clayton.

Here the fickle public hilariously testified to the merits of its deliverer.

"Sir," continued Lady Ursula, with bitterness, "a sneer is not an argument. It is easy to be impertinent; but I want to hear reason. What have you to say?"

"That he who has a lady for his opponent, loses, even if he wins."

"Mere evasion," cried his fair adversary, vehemently. "I ask for an answer. Please to forget that I am a lady!"

"On the contrary, madam, I am sure you will assist me to remember it."

Clayton said this with an accent so courteous, and a bow so profound, that Lady Ursula did not at first perceive how very possible it was that she might be taken at her word. I think, however, that an inkling of this danger gradually broke upon her. She rose suddenly from her seat, walked to the French window that opened upon the terrace, and disappeared. For more than a week afterwards, Lady Ursula kept her room.

From the aforesaid window we soon discerned the Doctor's brougham dashing with unwonted velocity towards the park gates. The impetuous, overbearing vehicle, which took all the curves of the road at angles, and thundered down upon alarmed pedestrians, suggested, by a natural association of ideas, that Mr. Dixit might be on his travels. When this random guess was turned into certainty; when we learned that the putter-down was indeed hurrying on to secure the next train; devoutly did we wish the coachman good speed.

He was in time. He had driven away with an incubus that rolled from our hearts in the same degree that the carriage lessened to our eyes. He came back to us with an empty brougham, an honest, cheerful servant, quite unconscious of the moral debt we owed him. But, from that moment, we grew sociable and happy. Whether the sun felt really more free to do his best, now that he was secure from intimidation, or that we saw him with more hopeful eyes, he seemed to shine next morning with unprecedented splendour. Silent people found their tongues; timid people ventured to have opinions; repressed humourists had their jokes. We had

gipsy-parties by day, impromptu balls at night :

All went merry as the marriage-bells.

Some months afterwards, the marriage bell went indeed from the quaint old church near Clevedon Hall. It might have seemed like cruel kindness in Clayton to insist that I should be present at the wedding-breakfast ; but he meant it in friendship. To me it fell to propose the health of the bride (ah, arch, rare Miss Martindale !) and groom. One part of my speech was received with distinguished approbation. It was that passage in which from the cornucopia of blessings which I desired for them, I singled out this special one : that their happy home might never be darkened by the invasion of a putter-down.

SOWING AND REAPING.

Sow with a generous hand,
Pause not for toil or pain,
Weary not through the heat of summer,
Weary not through the cold spring rain ;
But wait till the autumn comes
For the sheaves of golden grain.

Scatter the seed, and fear not,
A table will be spread ;
What matter if you are too weary
To eat your hard-earned bread :
Sow, while the earth is broken,
For the hungry must be fed.

Sow ;—while the seeds are lying
In the warm earth's bosom deep,
And your warm tears fall upon it—
They will stir in their quiet sleep ;
And the green blades rise the quicker,
Perchance, for the tears you weep.

Then sow,—for the hours are fleeting,
And the seed must fall to-day ;
And care not what hands shall reap it,
Or if you shall have pass'd away
Before the waving corn-fields
Shall gladden the sunny day.

Sow, and look onward, upward,
Where the starry light appears—
Where, in spite of the coward's doubting,
Or your own heart's trembling fears,
You shall reap in joy the harvest
You have sown to-day in tears.

THE OFFICIAL BLACK SWAN.

THE official black swan is the Post Office. It is the one government office that consents fairly to take the measure of its work, and to do it, in the most direct way possible. No doubt the daily friction with the entire body of the public is the cause of this, and not any inherent virtue in the Post-Office itself as a department. A few thousand inventors or a few hundred thousand colonists can easily be dealt with by routine ; but the necessity of daily contact with the millions at home

compels activity. Therefore it is that the letters of the present generation are not, in the ordinary course of government routine, delivered to the next : the invitation of Belinda to a ball is not doomed to wait for an application to the right department upon affidavit to the order of the deceased old lady's heirs, administrators, and assigns.

Three hundred years ago an important letter of state was more than three days and three nights on the post-road from the Archbishop of Canterbury at Croydon to the Secretary of State at Waltham Cross, a distance of sixty miles. Less than two hundred years ago, a coach and six horses, aided by a government pension, undertook the carriage of the mails in six days from Edinburgh to Glasgow (forty-four miles) and back, but found the work too arduous. Less than a hundred years ago the first mail coach was seen in Edinburgh. Twenty years ago there was no penny postage. Ten years ago there were no means of transmitting money cheaply by post. Five years ago there was no book post. Of progress of this sort, the public has a tolerably accurate impression. Nevertheless, how much advance is made from year to year, how the efficiency of the Post Office department is maintained—not by its being crystallised into a given form ; but by its daily life and growth, and an incessant process of development—we have been able only lately to perceive.

This busy department, working with and for the public, has a right to demand that the public should work with and (to a certain reasonable extent) for it ; the public's profit and advantage being in each case the object sought. Last year the Post Office began the plan of issuing yearly reports, whereby the community might see what it was about ; and wherein and for what reason help of any kind might be afforded to it. The second of its reports has just been issued, and out of it we proceed to illustrate what we have here been saying.

We begin at once with the last year's advances. Within the twelvemonth five hundred and twenty-five new post-offices were opened for the increased accommodation of the public ; and, by the appointment of rural messengers in places too small to warrant the establishment of an office, a nearer approach has been made to a delivery of letters throughout all the nooks and crannies of the country. The deliveries were extended last year to one thousand three hundred and twenty-seven places, where, before, they did not exist ; and the free delivery was improved in six hundred and fifty other places. Pillar letter-boxes in the streets of towns have been tried, and found successful ; therefore it is intended that their number shall be largely increased. The chief advantage is, that collections may be made from them at hours when it would be unreasonable to expect private shop-

keepers to do post-office duty. The early morning delivery has been extended to several more places round the London district; but, as regards the delivery of London letters, changes are at this moment in progress for the full success of which some little help is needed from the public. Of the whole number of letters delivered in the United Kingdom nearly a quarter are delivered in London and its suburbs; nearly half pass through the London office. To facilitate the London business and to increase despatch in the delivery, it is now proposed to get rid of the obstacle arising from the vast bulk of the metropolis, by considering London, not as one town, but as ten towns. At present, a letter posted in one part of London, and addressed to another part close at hand, may have a circuit of five or six miles to take; because the centre of distribution is only Saint Martin's-le-Grand. Letters from the country all pass through the present central office, where they are sorted once; then they must go into their several districts; and then have to be sorted again with reference to streets and houses. By treating London as ten towns, each with its own centre of operations, this difficulty will be avoided. Country letters will be delivered straightway—without passing through an intermediate sorting—to the parts of town for which they are destined; and the sorters there, having the necessary local knowledge, will distribute them immediately into postmen's walks, and forward them, at a saving of one, two, or three hours of delay, to their several addresses. So, with letters from one part of London to another. A letter from Belgravia to Tyburnia will go direct from place to place, instead of travelling ten miles to and from St. Martin's-le-Grand.

The ten towns, or independent districts into which it is proposed to divide London, are named from their relative positions. Thus in the southern district, will be included Kennington, Stockwell, Brixton, Streatham, Mitcham, and Carshalton; in the northern, Islington, Highbury, Hornsey, Enfield, and a bit of Waltham Cross. The north-western district will extend from Camden Town to Harrow; the western, from Oxford Street to Norwood; the south-western, from Charing Cross to Hampton Court and Sunbury; the eastern, from Bethnal Green to Romford. The central, east central, and west central, will include the city and neighbourhoods adjacent.

But, from country postmasters, it will be too much to expect any minute knowledge of the geography of London. Residents in London must, therefore, enable their provincial correspondents to fall in with the new scheme by appending the initial letters of their district to the usual—or indeed often less than the usual—addresses. "Liverpool Street, Bishopsgate, London," will become "Liverpool Street,

E. C., London," and "Hill Street, Berkely Square," will shorten into "Hill Street, W." Many addresses will be further simplified, and post-office work facilitated, when the new Board of Works has got rid of the duplicate names of streets where they occur in the same district. This appeal to the compass is not absolutely necessary to the new plan; although those letters on which it is not made, may lose the chance of early delivery.

In respect of railways, the gain of the Post Office, or the public, by their mail-trains is in the enormous advantage of their increased speed, and the power they give of getting through the sorting and the carrying, both at one time. There is no other kind of gain; on the contrary, a money-loss, for railway-companies complain that they are not paid well enough. This complaint can be hardly well-founded; for we learn that the old cost of carrying the mails by coaches averaged twopence farthing a mile, and that the average price now paid for the same service to railways is tenpence a mile; that under the old system tenpence farthing was the highest mile rate ever paid, and that it is now sometimes as high as four shillings and tenpence a mile; which is very much the same sort of thing as a charge upon passengers of four times the old coach fares for railway travelling, in consideration of the benefit of speed; with the complaint added, that such payment is niggardly and wretched. The cost of running a train may be assumed in most cases to be about fifteen pence per mile; and, upon this, the post-office inquires of the public, whether it is to be considered very stingy in paying for the use of only a fraction of a train at the rate of from sixty to two hundred and sixty per cent. in excess of the whole cost of running? The argument that the Rowland Hill system could not have existed without railways, is sufficiently answered by the curious fact that more than half the transit of post letters is still effected by coaches and carts. During the past year the average number of miles performed by railways for the post-office was twenty-seven thousand one hundred miles per week-day, at an average cost of tenpence per mile; while thirty-one thousand six hundred miles per week-day were traversed by mail-coaches and mail-carts, at an average cost of twopence farthing per mile.

We add a paragraph of miscellaneous facts. Of the whole number of Valentines sent through the post (eight hundred thousand), the supply furnished by Ireland is on the decrease. In England and Scotland, on the increase. Through France alone there passed last year two millions of letters between the people of this country and their sons, fathers, brothers and friends who had gone out to battle in the East. The number of mis-sent and returned letters in the United Kingdom has now

fallen as low as three-quarters per cent. In the colonies, however—partly through the shifting nature of the population, partly through the want of any good means of delivery among the colonists—the number of returned letters is as great as twelve in every hundred; and yet, of forty-two thousand letters thus failing to reach their destination, all but two thousand had been prepaid, and nearly fifteen hundred of them had been even registered.

The change in the stamp-tax has diminished by one-fourth the number of newspapers posted; the number of book packets is increasing rapidly, as the use of the book-post becomes familiarly known. To a considerable extent, the book packets consist of tradesmen's circulars and catalogues. The money order system is also growing very rapidly. In Liverpool there were nearly twice as many orders issued and paid in the one month of December last, in Birmingham four times as many, as were issued and paid in those towns during the whole of the year eighteen hundred and forty. The removal of some very trifling checks that had been found superfluous precautions in the business of granting and paying—slight matter as it seemed—produced an increase of money orders issued in the last quarter of last year, more rapid than had been known at any previous time.

We are glad to find that the Post Office department intends giving a full knowledge of what may be done through its agency by means of a cheap little Guide, renewed as often as proves necessary. It may not be too much to say that half the people in this country who use the Post Office do not know clearly all the benefit they can derive from it, so rapid is the healthy growth of this Black Swan among the offices.

GOLD-HUNTING.

IN TWO PARTS. PART THE SECOND.

As the great Dr. Swinburne could not leave the Medical Hall, he set himself about enclosing it with post and rail, and ornamenting it by the importation of various flowering shrubs from the neighbouring forest. He had neither mortar nor scales, nor any drugs to weigh and compound in them; so he proposed to supply himself from a druggist's not far off, should he be fortunate to obtain any patients. And these were not long wanting. Accidents were constantly occurring on the field, and George, who was prowling about for fresh claims, was sure to cry out "To Dr. Swinburne's!" and helped to carry the patient there. Adam's real cleverness was soon perceived, and practice followed rapidly. Not a word of advice was given under a sovereign, and a few doses of medicine were rewarded with an ounce—that is, an ounce of gold, value three pounds seventeen shillings.

"Who would dig?" said Adam, triumphantly, as he tossed the first real sovereign in his hands. George, you shall be tent-keeper, and cook, and we'll go halves till there's enough for you to start as a lawyer with in Melbourne; and then you shall give me halves for the first year. There! That, I know, is a good bargain for me."

George set to work in his new post. Soon, they had a Medical Hall of really grand dimensions for canvas, and not only a pestle and mortar and medicines, but Adam had his horse, and rode far and wide through the diggings. George was groom; and, as they had little to be robbed of in the tent—for Adam every evening carried his cash to the gold-office at the government camp—when Adam was on his rounds, George amused himself by felling poles in the woods just by, and peeling stringy bark, with which he soon built a stable near the Medical Hall. The horse was fed on hay and oats at a shilling a pound each; and they themselves on bread at five shillings the quarter loaf, potatoes at one shilling a pound, and fresh butter at five shillings. But what then? The gold now flowed in in a royal stream. Adam plucked out a digger's tooth—a pound; clapped a piece of sticking-plaster on a bruised arm—a pound; gave a dose of salts in a bottle of water and a little colouring matter—a pound. Nothing was done under a pound popped into the hand at the moment. A particular case, and down came "an ounce."

"Doctor," a digger would say, "just look at my leg."

"Ha! I see," replies Adam. "You must give over drinking."

"That's true," says the fellow. "But doctor, I've no money, but there's an ounce."

There was a deal of dysentery. Adam might have said with a certain doctor, "A world of sickness! Providence has been very kind to us lately!" but he was too humane. Nevertheless, he could not but exult in his unbounded success. "This is the true gold mine, Geordy; you'll soon have to be off to Melbourne, and commence conveyancer. And yet, what am I to do without you? Who is to watch my tent, and cook, and keep all straight, and have my horse ready, and in such condition? It is really a shame, George, to make a groom and butler of you; but there is nobody that can do like you. Well, a few weeks." In fact, Adam's practice was already at the rate of eight thousand a-year.

One morning Adam started up, for he had a hard day's ride before him. Typhus fever was raging in a low flat, where quantities of stagnant water had collected, and heaps of offal and all kinds of impurities were scattered over the ground, and rotted and festered in the sun. He had been there day after day for the last week, not only attending to the numerous poor people who were attacked by the fever, but in seeing

sanitary measures carried out, by burning or burying the putrid matter. He had been led by the fœtid odour brought on the wind to a hill which overlooked the flat, and there had discovered a scene that made him stand in utter astonishment. It was a slaughter-yard, which had been, recently deserted by the butchers being actually driven away by the intolerable stench, and the legions of flies which enveloped them at their business, and made it impossible to proceed. And what a scene! The whole hill-top was one mass of dried gore and piles of bullock's heads, all rotting in an inconceivable fetor, and blackened over with flies, which rose up with a sound as of thunder. Torrents of gore had rolled down the sides of the hill, and the fenced slaughter-yard was hung with hides which had curled and dried to the hardness of boards in the sun. No wonder at the typhus which raged below.

Adam rode off to the government camp, where an inspector lived with a salary of three hundred pounds a-year, whose main business was to prevent these very nuisances. But the man said no men were to be got to cover up the decomposing mass. Adam appealed to the commissioners, who replied with a shrug, and asked where the men at a pound a-day each were to be found. Without waiting to give a reply, he rode back to the flat, called together the diggers, and told them they must either relinquish the gold in the flat, or their lives; or they must come to the rescue, and bury the horrible Golgotha. At once, and to a man, they shouldered pick and shovel, mounted the hill of abomination, and in a single day its horrors were buried deep and secure from evil or offence.

This morning poor Adam, however, reeled forward, as he rose from his bed, and fell on the floor.

"Gracious heavens, Adam, what ails you?" cried George, springing to his assistance.

But Adam had already partly recovered himself, and sitting up, rubbed his hand across his forehead, and said, "Oh my head! my head! What's this?"

"What is it?" asked George, in alarm; "how do you feel, Adam?"

"Dizzy! dizzy!" said Adam, "the tent goes round with me—the ground reels—Heaven help me! I must lie down."

He lay down again on his bed, while George, leaning over him in the utmost terror and anxiety, said,

"I'll run for the doctor, Adam; you are very, very ill, I know."

"Yes," said Adam, "do, dear George; I know what it is—it is that fatal typhus."

George darted from the tent like one possessed, with nothing on but his shirt and trousers. With bare feet, careless of the myriads of broken bottles which strewed the ground of every digging, he rushed along, unmindful of wondering looks and numberless inquiries from the surprised spectators.

The same kind-hearted medical man who had attended Adam before was soon at his bedside. Adam was lying still, but pale. The slightest attempt to raise his head producing the same reeling, rolling sensation. The doctor at once pronounced it an attack of typhus, and that it had seized powerfully on the system. It must, he said, have been gathering head for several days, but had been unperceived by Adam from his state of active exertion and excitement. He ordered the tent to be kept cool and well open to the air, and sent in immediately the necessary remedies. He promised to see him again in a very few hours, and to get another young surgeon to attend Adam's patients. When he left the tent, George threw himself on his knees by the bed, and, seizing Adam's hand, he said,—

"O, Adam! if I could but suffer this for you—you who are so much wanted—so useful—and I who am of no use to anybody."

"You, George! why you are everything to me. What could I do without you now? Listen, and yet don't frighten yourself, but let me speak to you while I can, for I may become delirious."

George gave a groan, and turned deathly pale.

"Nay, now," continued Adam, "you are frightening yourself, and yet all may be well, and most likely will, for I am young and strong, but it is necessary to be prepared. Hear, then. If anything happens to me, you are to take everything for the present—sell everything; and with the money in the bank, go down to Melbourne, and commence your career; you will succeed; and when you can do it without inconvenience, settle the few hundred pounds on my mother and sister—they are poor, and will miss me."

Here Adam was silent, as if serious thoughts pressed on him, and George was weeping and sobbing, strong man as he was, in an utter abandonment of grief. But Adam said again:

"Why, how now, Geordy! that is really weak of you—I have no fear any way myself—if the fever should carry me off, God's will be done! but I am not imagining that; I only tell you what I should, as a prudent man, tell you. Pray get a branch, and drive away these flies."

George recovered himself, brought at once a leafy branch, and began waving it near Adam's head to keep the flies from his face.

"That is a delicious fan, too," said Adam, with a smile; "and if you could read to me a little in the Gospels, that would indeed be luxurious."

George took the book, and began. His heart now clung to every word as to the sole anchor of earthly existence.

But Adam's precautions soon showed themselves just. The disease, spite of the most skilful and unremitting efforts of the doctor,

grew and went on resistlessly. The weather was intensely hot; the flies, drawn, no doubt, by the miasma of the complaint, poured in in legions—eager, fearless, intensely active, and assailing legions—and it required all George's exertions to whisk them away with his never-resting branch from the face of his friend.

Adam's head was become more confused, his thoughts wandered, he was already delirious, though quietly so, and his mind was busy in the home of his youth. He told his mother and sister what he had been doing for them, how successful he had been; a few more years, and he should come back a very, very rich man, and then they should never know any more poverty, any more necessity with all its curtailings and contrivings. There was another being—a Mary Hepburn—who made a beautiful part of the picture of that fair future, and his dear friend George, his friend and brother, how were they all to love him for his kindness and faithful affection to him.

As he uttered these things, George listened with a heart ready to break, and often started up wildly, as if he would snatch and tear away the clinging evil that enveloped him. He saw here revealed the daily thoughts which reigned in the mind of poor Adam—which had made his rides so delightful, his duties so easy; and now, if the worst happened, what was to become of those beloved beings for whom he had thus planned and toiled? How was he himself to bear it?

His reflections were interrupted by the entrance of the doctor, attended by another medical man. George's heart felt a spasm at the sight; it was proof that the doctor was himself alarmed. They requested George to allow them to be alone for a few minutes, and then the doctor, stepping out with a grave air, said to George:

"You must be courageous, my friend; you must not be cast down; but I fear the fever will prove too strong for us. It is a bad case, and I am very sorry. Poor Swinburne! he is a fine fellow, a noble fellow! I think I never saw such a man. So clever, so modest, and so good. If ever there was a martyr to a kind, generous heart, it is our friend. But what are you about?" perceiving George standing as if frozen to the spot, and trembling in every joint with emotion.

"You must not give way, Mr. Widdrington—you must not, indeed; we'll try yet—we may succeed. All is as God wills, and as for you, you have so much to do. You must keep the tent as cool as you can; and these cursed flies, don't let them tease him; moisten the patient's lips often with water, keep these cooling wet cloths to his heart, and I'll be back presently."

The doctors in silence took their leave. George went in, threw himself down by the sufferer's bed, kissed passionately his burning forehead, and his fevered, dry hand, while

poor Adam slept soundly and unconscious of his friend's affliction. What a watch of deep and speechless wretchedness was that of George Widdrington! With no soul to exchange a thought, a care, with—all alone in the world with this great grief, this overwhelming terror and trouble. Yet incessantly he waved the protecting bough, keeping back the undaunted pestilence of flies, and replacing cool cloths on the burning head of his friend, and moistening his parched lips.

The doctor re-appeared.

"He sleeps!" cried George; "sleeps deep and quietly—that must be well."

The information elicited no approving nod, or brightening expression, from the doctor.

"It is comatose sleep," he said; "it bodes us no good."

George was struck dumb, and the coldness of death seemed to go through his very marrow.

In that warm season of a climate so much warmer than our own, the progress of disease was rapid. Adam slept on. Night came; the tormenting flies withdrew, and George sat motionless by the sick bed, the picture of desolation. Adam moved, opened his eyes, and seeing George as he there sat, haggard and ghostlike with watching and harrowing anxiety, he put out his hand and said,

"Dearest George, we must part. I feel it—and I imagined it before. But you must bear up. You have many dear to you. If you are not happy in this country—go to them—that is the best fortune. And—but I will not repeat it—you will be kind to my beloved ones, as you have been kind to me. And now, dear Geordy, one more chapter of St. John."

George was beside himself with grief; he sobbed hysterically, but could not speak a word. Yet he rose, brought the Bible, and after a hard struggle with himself, he opened the book and read, "Let not your hearts be troubled. Ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my father's house there are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you."

At this point George felt a strong pressure of Adam's hand. He looked at him. Adam gave him an inexpressibly affectionate smile, and once more his eyes closed—his grasp relaxed—and George sat silently gazing upon him. This had continued about a quarter of an hour, when he perceived Adam slightly move, give a faint sigh, and lie still. It was an ominous stillness. George started up, put his hand to his mouth, and sank back into his seat, clasping his head hard between his hands. Adam was dead!

If ever there was a desolate spot on earth, it was that tent that night; if ever a grief-prostrated being, it was poor George. Through those long dark hours he sat, and the whole world seemed dark with him. Till that moment he never seemed to have known all

the goodness and pleasantness of his friend,—never to have valued him aright. That cheerful, hopeful soul,—that generous, unselfish nature,—that mind so full of knowledge and sunny thoughts, and cordial, genial humour. From the sight of the future he shrunk back; from that dark solitary road that he must travel amongst rude strangers alone.

But time stops for neither the happy nor the miserable. Morning came, and with it the doctor and the flies. In a kindly but energetic tone, he told George that he must rouse himself; that the funeral must take place that very day, and covering over the body with a sheet, he bade George go and attend to the horse while he went and gave the necessary orders. When he returned, he forced George away with him to his own tent, and kept him there.

We must not dwell on this melancholy part of our story. In a few days the remains of Adam Swinburne slept in the already populous cemetery of Forest Creek. George, exerting himself under the kindly influence of the doctor, had sold the tent and effects, the doctor wishing to purchase the horse, and for which, spite of George's remonstrances, he paid a very handsome price, though his medical attendance had, of course, been gratuitous to his brother practitioner. The money George had transferred to the Bank of Australasia, in Melbourne, with the exception of a small reserve for his own necessities, and as a loan, and sent an order to pay it over to their bank in London, for Adam's mother, to whom he wrote the melancholy news of her son's decease.

For himself, the prospect of a sedentary life in Melbourne, even with the hope of achieving a brilliant fortune, had at present no charms. At his heart there lay a heavy, cheerless weight. He seemed to need action, constant, restless action,—the air of the hills, the free freshness of the forest, hard travel, hard labour, to drive the deadly torpor from his spirit, to give him sleep at night. There was a fever in his blood that seemed to urge him on and on. So, in the rude phrase of the digger, he once more humped his swag, that is, threw the rolled-up blanket on his back, with pick, shovel, and tin dish, and set out for fresh scenes.

We need not follow him too minutely. He travelled from one gold-field to another, and dug laboriously, and with varied success. But he was always a solitary digger; he never felt as if he could take a stranger into the place of Adam the inimitable. Autumn found him at the Ovens, much improved in his funds, but still restless and melancholy. Besides the death of Adam Swinburne, he had other griefs which lay heavy upon him. Since he set foot on Australian ground he had never received a single line from any one at home, nor could he learn from any new arrival that his letters homeward had been

more fortunate. Every one attributed the fact, which was by no means a solitary one,—there were thousands of like cases,—to the inefficient condition of the Melbourne post-office, which, from a false economy of the colonial government, was not half manned, and was become an unfathomable limbo of letters and newspapers.

But this theory did not remove the fact that George had had no communication with his home friends, and a thousand uneasy and gloomily shaping fancies haunted his mind. Had he not acted a foolish part? Thrown recklessly away the brightest prospects for a mere *ignis fatuus*? Might not Ellen Mowbray have gradually come to consider him in the long period for serious reflection, as a fickle, impetuous, and not very sagacious character? The only person who could give him any news from home was a sailor, who had originally been a Warkworth fisherman, then had sailed in a Hull merchantman, and run off to the diggings. From him George heard that his own family was well: but that Mr. Mowbray was dead. When the man spoke of Miss Mowbray, he seemed to give George a look, as if he said, "Ay, and did not you miss it there, Master Widdrington? What a beautiful lady Miss Mowbray was grown! How she was admired! There was not a woman in Northumberland fit to carry her shoes after her; and now so rich as she was, he reckoned she would marry a lord or a duke at least."

That was the only news George had received since he landed; and poor and mere hearsay as the information of such a man was, it did not fail to disturb him. He resolved to return home, not as the prodigal son, unless he found open doors to receive him, but with the little capital he now possessed, to commence practice in Newcastle. Wonderful rumours were at this moment flying to and fro of a new goldfield at Lake Omeo, on the Gippsland side of the snowy mountains. It was an expedition that seized powerfully on his feverish, restless mind. New scenes in the wildest mountain regions, a stout walk by swift rivers, and through mountain forests, over snow-crowned peaks, and amid the vigorous winds of autumn,—his heart felt cooled and lightened at the thought of it. From Omeo to Alburton was but a few days' journey, and then he would take ship for Melbourne and home.

The distance to Omeo from the Ovens was a hundred and seventy miles. In three long days, he had rounded the spurs of the mountains near Reid's hill, and traced a good long track along the banks of the Mitta-Mitta. The river had ceased to pursue its quiet course in the lowlands, and came gaily and with a crystal clearness and vivacity through the steeper valley. Our hero, in his scarlet blouse, belted at the waist, and displaying there his trusty revolver, and with his rug rolled neatly on his back, his shovel slung

by its hooped handle on the elve of his pick, cut a striking figure as he strode along. His tall and graceful form, his elastic step, bid those who followed him to expect a face of equally fresh and handsome character to turn upon them as they passed; and there was an evident feeling of surprise manifested in the grave looks of the passers-by, at the really handsome but careworn features of the young man. Handsome brown hair beneath his ruddy wide-awake, and a short, rather golden-hued beard, ought to have belonged to a youthfully cheerful face, but they shaded fine features on which there lay a sickly hue, and a settled gloom.

George Widdrington was seated on a fallen tree by the wayside, on the evening of the third day of his journey. He was thinking whether he should there pitch his little tent for the night, or make another step onward. The country was become hilly, and increasingly toilsome for the traveller. Green ranges thinly scattered with trees, rose finely at the feet of still more lofty and thickly wooded heights; and his eyes rested on the scenery with a pleasure which strongly tempted him to stop there for the night. While these thoughts were passing through his mind, a couple of equestrians appeared rounding the road. The one was an elderly gentleman, the other a young lady of striking figure, and in a fashionable habit and riding-hat. The lady was mounted on a remarkably handsome horse, and came slowly on, conversing with the elderly gentleman in a voice which excited, by its musical and cultivated tones, the wonder of our traveller. "Do these deserts," he said to himself, "send forth apparitions like these?"

As the strangers passed, they both gazed earnestly at George, as if they saw more than an ordinary digger in his appearance. He involuntarily raised his hat to the lady who rode nearest to him, and she returned the courtesy by a graceful inclination of the head and a pleasant smile. But George Widdrington followed the lady with a fixed regard that partook of no little astonishment. What a lovely, sensible face; and what a strong likeness to Ellen Mowbray! The form was taller, the face of a more mature character; there was a wide difference, and yet a most wonderful resemblance. It was Ellen and it was not: but who could it be having any so kindred a look in this far-off world? George was lost in astonishment and greatly excited, and while his eyes were still fixed on the strange vision, he saw her speak to her companion. They stopped their horses, and the gentleman came back.

There was a remarkable mildness and gentleness in his appearance, and addressing George, evidently as a gentleman, he said:

"You are bound for Omeo, probably?"

"Yes," replied George.

"The night is coming on," said the stranger, "and the roads beyond here are

very steep. Had you not better stay here? My hut is just on the hill there"—pointing to a white house, not far off, that stood boldly overlooking the country.

"Thank you," replied George, smiling, "but I carry my house with me," touching his swag.

"But I think mine is better," rejoined the amiable old gentleman, and it is much at your service. The night, I think, will be stormy. The birds are flocking in crowds down from the mountains, and that tells of wild weather in the hills."

"You are very kind, sir," said George, whose own curiosity drew him vigorously to learn something more of the lady. "I will gratefully accept your hospitality."

"That is right," said the gentleman, heartily. "You will see the track above," and he rode on.

George followed, full of strange thoughts and feelings, and wonderfully struck, when he reached the level of the range on which the station stood, at the view of the country around. Above and before him ascended lofty piles of hills, dark with forests and bold with projecting foreland and retiring coves. Below lay a vast country and boundless breadth of dark roads, and near at hand green and swelling fields, having a soft yet bold beauty and a verdure sprinkled with graceful trees, as if human cultivation and taste had been at work there, instead of the spirit of nature, which alone it was.

As he drew near the house, he saw that it was embellished by a large garden, in which apple-trees hung with their autumnal crop in the most prodigal profusion, in such abundance that they were obliged to be propped to prevent the branches being torn off by their load. In front, seats were placed on turf under the trees, and everywhere there were proofs that people of superior taste lived there, who had ideas beyond mere squatting. George took his way to the apartment where casual callers of the digger class were generally entertained, and deposited his load on the floor. But the master of the house speedily appeared, and requested him to accompany him to his own sitting-room, first offering him an adjoining bed-room to wash in.

On entering the sitting-room, which likewise presented many instances in its furnishing of the same superior style of living as was obvious without, he was presented to the young lady he had lately seen, and who, having put off her riding-dress, was busy preparing tea, which was on the table.

The likeness to Ellen Mowbray was now so striking, and yet there was a likeness, in expression as well as feature. But her form was taller and more slender, and she could not be less than six or seven-and-twenty years of age. She advanced as her father introduced George, saying, "Here is our guest," with the most affable and yet

lady-like sweetness, and offered the young man her hand, thus, as well as by his installment in their own apartment, showing that she knew him to be a gentleman, though a digger in costume.

"You have done well, I think, sir," she said, while motioning him to be seated at the table, on which stood not only tea apparatus but substantial dishes of meat and pies, "to stay here, for the mountains are becoming almost too wintery for tent lodging."

George said he certainly was much better off here on many accounts.

"Do you know," said her father, who was busily helping their guest to some smoking beef-steak, "that I fear you will find yourself too late at Omeo for this season. The winter rains are certainly coming, and there will be too much water to allow you to work."

"I shall then only have my usual luck," said George.

"You have not been lucky?" asked his host.

"Not as diggers call luck," the young man replied.

"But as gentlemen find it, I suppose," said the lady, brightly smiling. George bowed.

"But how must I call you, my young friend?" continued the father, "for one is awkward without names."

"My name is Widdrington."

"George Widdrington?" added the young lady, fixing a blushing and earnest, yet brightly smiling gaze at him.

"How!" exclaimed George. "You know my name!" He sat fixed with amazement.

"Oh!" continued the lady, rising suddenly, and seizing his hand, "it is a name very familiar to us." And, at the same time, he found his other hand seized by the old gentleman, who, with his eye lighting with emotion, exclaimed, "Welcome Mr. Widdrington, welcome—right welcome—to Mount Tracy!"

"But may I ask," said George, more and more overpowered with wonder, "by what means you knew me, and who they are by whom I am thus so kindly accosted."

"Tracy is our name," said the young lady.

"Tracy! If I were in New Zealand the mystery would be clear; but here——"

"Here you see the very same Tracys," said the lady, still holding George's hand, and with features teaming with pleasure.

"Then you are the cousin of Ellen Mowbray," said George, more and more astonished, "and there goes another mystery, your strong likeness to her."

"Am I like her, think you? But, my dear father, was I not right when I said that was very like George Widdrington who sate by the road?"

"Again, you amaze me," said George.

"You never saw me before; then how could you know me?"

"Do you think I had no reason to recognise you?" added she, taking down a miniature which hung amongst others on the wall, and presenting it to him. It was one which he had, shortly before leaving England, given to Ellen Mowbray, and saying, "I see," he sate down in a state of strangely mingled emotion.

"But this will be joyful news for your friends: we must lose no time in sending it off."

"Have my friends inquired after me?" demanded George.

"Have they inquired?" exclaimed Miss Tracy. "What! have you never seen advertisement after advertisement in the Melbourne papers, making all possible inquiries after you? Don't you know that not a word has reached England respecting you since you left it?"

"I can't believe it," said George; "for no news, except one slight fragment of intelligence through a stranger, has ever reached me. As for the papers, I never had them."

"That is still more strange," said Miss Tracy, "for not a month passed without letters having been written to you."

"Of which," replied George, "I never received one."

"Then we have much to tell you," said Miss Tracy, first whispering a word in her father's ear; and then followed a long revelation of events and messages which gave George the most profound satisfaction. His own parents and brother were all perfectly well, Miss Mowbray was the same; and the very facts of her having sent over his portrait to her cousin, and set her to make every possible inquiry after him were unmistakable evidences that her feelings towards him were in no degree changed. The whole was to him like a sudden opening in heaven. A deadly weight was thrown from his bosom. The hovering shade cleared wonderfully from his brow. As by a strange enchantment, he found himself at once in the house of affectionate friends, and in communication with his own nearest and dearest connections. The vast circle of the globe seemed suddenly reduced to compassable dimensions, over which the voices of those he loved could at length reach him.

After Mr. Tracy had retired for the night, he sate with Miss Tracy, and soon found that she was perfectly acquainted with his history. She left him in no doubt as to the warm and unshaken attachment of her cousin to him, and of the zealous and continued exertions she had made to trace him out, both for the satisfaction of his anxious family and her own. She produced and read him many extracts from Ellen's letters, and George went to bed that night and dreamt dreams of youth and happiness renewed. In

the noble heart of so devoted a woman as Ellen Mowbray he felt himself richer than if he had dug up all the gold in the creeks of Victoria.

The next day, Miss Tracy, whose good, clear sense and warm-hearted character he more and more admired, took him a long ride through the woods and hills, which greatly raised his ideas of the country there, and on their return, as he waited for dinner, he heard voices in the adjoining room, which was the sleeping-room of Miss Tracy, the house being only of one storey, which made him wonder what guest had arrived in his absence. It was the voice of another lady, very like in its utterance to that of Miss Tracy. Presently, as the conversation grew more earnest, he caught a tone which thrilled through his heart like fire. It was the very tone of Ellen Mowbray, as he had heard it in her happiest moments, and as he thought he could never confound with any other. But that could not be hers; she could not be here.

As he stood full of wonder in that most wonderful house, which at every instant gave him a new surprise, a bright face appeared at the door; an exclamation of delight was given, and Ellen Mowbray herself was in his arms.

There she was, glowing and trembling with emotion, beautiful as ever, but with the expression of a saddened experience, and a woman's deepest anxiety stamped on those lovely, mind-ennobled features. George now learned that after her father's death Ellen, on learning that her uncle Tracy had removed from New Zealand to this colony, had determined to pay them a visit, and learn, if possible, the fate of her lover. She had left her property in the care of George's father. She had been here three months, occupied—hitherto in vain—with inquiries after him. The quick eye of Miss Tracy had detected him, or he might have crossed the mountains and returned to Europe, there to find that he had passed her very door at the antipodes.

George now learned another fact, that Miss Tracy was engaged to a neighbouring gentleman, Captain Maitland, who lived about ten miles off, and that Ellen was on a visit to his mother, who lived with him, at the time of George's arrival. Miss Tracy had sent off post-haste a message with the joyful news, and here she was.

There needs no attempt to paint the happiness that now reigned at Mount Tracy. Every one was now as blest as human beings can be. There remained no jarring chord in the spiritual harmony of the youthful lovers. Miss Tracy was supremely happy in having thus achieved the happiness of her friends, and Mr. Tracy, whose mild and benevolent heart rejoiced in all human good, was pre-eminently happy in this singular and fortunate reunion.

The next day an expedition was made to Captain Maitland's, with whom George Widdrington soon established a warm friendship. His simple, yet gentlemanly and highly intelligent mind and character, were such as won universally on all who were of an elevated and manly grade. His character differed much from that of poor Adam Swinburne, and could never take the same sacred place in his heart, but was one for which he soon felt a brotherly affection. The two young men hunted together in the woods and mountains, where the kangaroo and emu still remained plentifully, and where the nightly howlings of the wild dogs told them that they never could want beasts for the chase.

So greatly were both George and Ellen Mowbray delighted with the country, and with the society of their affectionate relatives, that they determined to settle there at least for some years. This resolve was received by their friends with exultation. With such a society they could never be lonely; and the noble features of that mountainous district, with its resources for the chase, and the scenery of its great herds of cattle which ranged the hills and hilly glades, its free, uncircumscribed rides, and an ample supply of books and music from England, gave a grand charm to their existence.

The following spring, George and Ellen, and Captain Maitland and Miss Tracy, were married on the same day, by a neighbouring clergyman. The Captain took his wife to his own station, and George and Ellen remained with the kind and fatherly Mr. Tracy. Since then, George's father and mother have gone over, and settled near them. Andrew, the other son, sticks to the old dwelling of Windy Haugh. The house of the Mowbrays is let.

Old Mr. Widdrington finds endless subjects of wonder in everything around him: the immense estates over which the flocks and herds wander; the very little land put under the plough; the strange, jumping creatures, the kangaroos, and the long-legged runners, the emus, vastly amaze him; and not less, that the hares jump like the kangaroos, and the rabbits have got up into the trees. The natives, too, excite his wrath and contempt: poor, feckless things, rambling about worse than gipsies, and downright arrant beggars, where there is such a scarcity of labour. He believes they have grown black by never washing themselves, and rubbing grease over them to keep off the flies, which, he thinks, catches the soot of their fires, that they sit over for days together.

In one of George's journeys down to Melbourne, he came across Tom Boyd, tending his flock on a very solitary station, and, as he had read all his books, and was just thinking of going home, he has persuaded him to exchange sheep for cattle, and Tom has done it, and gone up to Mount Tracy, lured by the promise of more books, and the opportunity of

talking with old Mr. and Mrs. Widdrington, real Coquet Dale people, and who knew all about Simonside Moor, Otterburne, and the Border.

We think it would be difficult to find a more congenial knot of people than is now settled about Mount Tracy. Sometimes, indeed, the Widdringtons and Tom Boyd talk themselves into such fits of enthusiasm, about Border raids, the Douglas, the Percy, and all the tales of moss-troopers that lay about Liddesdale and Lynedale, with wraiths and haunted castles, that they think there's no place like Northumberland, and that some day they will go there again; but in our opinion it will not be to-morrow, nor the next day, no, nor the day after.

THE MAN ON THE ICEBERG.

"It is a man!" said the captain, handing his telescope to the mate, after a long, steady look; "and he seems frozen hard and fast to the side of the iceberg."

"Keep her away!" cried the skipper. "So—o—o. Steady!" and by thus altering our course we brought the iceberg right a-head.

The iceberg had been in sight since the weather cleared at midnight, when it looked like some high rocky headland, except that, by watching the bright stars behind it, we could see its gigantic outline swaying solemnly and majestically up and down. There was something sublimely grand in the slow stately movement of such a mass. There it floated, large enough, had it been land, to have been the dwelling-place of hundreds of human beings. The lower part was of so dark a purple as to look almost black; but, higher up, it shaded off to a bright azure, then to a light pale green, while on its lofty summit were long slender spires and pinnales, and pieces of thin transparent ice, worked into all manner of fantastic forms, and either of a crystal whiteness, or tinted with a beautiful pale pink. There were bays and promontories, caves and grottos, hills and dells, with every variety of light and shade. The island was almost equally divided by a great valley running through its centre. This was half filled with snow; which, thawing slowly in the sun, formed the source of a waterfall, at a height so great that it was blown and scattered into fine rain before it reached the sea. Around its base—on which the sea was breaking with a noise less booming and more musical than when it dashes on the solid shore—was a broad band of frozen spray, which, glittering in the sunshine, looked like the silver setting of an enormous sapphire.

Not far from the top, and on the side nearest to us, was a vast, smooth, glassy plane, inclining steeply towards the sea, and terminating abruptly in a tremendous overhanging precipice. In the very centre of this plane, those among us who had good eyes could see

a small black spot. It was at this, the captain had been peering through his glass, when he said, "It is a man!"

Every glass in the ship was in requisition, and every eye strained towards one point. The excitement became almost frantic when one of the watchers suddenly exclaimed that he saw the man move his hand.

We approached; so near at last, that the plateau above, and its dread object, were at last hidden from view by the brink of the precipice itself, which seemed as if about to roll over and crush us. We sailed along its side, frequently lying-to, to explore each nook and corner as we passed. The farther end of the island, when we rounded it, presented quite a new feature; the base was sapped away and undermined for about half a mile by a succession of low cavernous hollows, extending inwards farther than we could see, while the sea rushing in and out tumultuously, made the pent-up air within howl and whistle like a hurricane. Altering our course again, we steered almost due west under the southern side, where its vast shadow spread out far and wide over the ocean. It now looked even grander, darker, more fear-inspiring, than before, with the sun beaming over its rugged crest, or shining through the thinner parts and showing all the prismatic colours of the rainbow. The form of the ice-island was that of an irregular triangle, and in about five hours we had sailed completely round it. But there was no single point at which any boat ever built could have landed, even had it been a dead calm, and the sea as still as a mill-pond; much less in such a heavy surf as was then foaming and creaming all around it. No sign of living thing was seen, excepting one great sleepy seal, that had crept into a hole just above water-mark, and lay there as if he were in comfortable quarters. No sign of boat, or spar, or wreck. It was a picture of utter desolation.

We hove-to again, at the nearest point from which the man upon the iceberg could be seen. He lay on his back with one arm folded in an unusual manner under his head, the whole attitude being one of easy repose; indeed, had it not been for the marbly look of his face and hands, we could have fancied that he was sleeping soundly. He was clothed as one of the better class of seamen, in rough blue pilot-cloth with large horn buttons; he had no hat, and by his side lay a small boat-hook, to which was tied a strip of red woollen stuff, apparently a piece of the same which he wore round his neck. This, no doubt, the poor fellow had intended planting on the heights as a signal. In such a thin, clear atmosphere, with the aid of a powerful telescope, even his features might be plainly traced, and his iron grey hair seen moving in the wind.

The second mate stoutly declared that he recognised the man—he was quite sure of it

—an old chum and shipmate of his with whom he had sailed many a long voyage, and some part of whose wild, varied history he told us the next evening. What seemed to convince him more than anything, was the peculiar way in which the dead man's arm was stowed away under his head—his old shipmate always slept so, even in his hammock.

Numerous and strange were the conjectures and remarks made by officers and men. Who, and what was he? How long had he been there? How did he get there? The general conclusion was, that he was one of the crew of some vessel wrecked upon the iceberg itself, of which no vestige remained.

"Yes, like enough," said one of the sailors; "she run into the ice in the dark, and went down like a stone, same as we may have done any time this last six weeks."

"Perhaps he was aloft when she struck, and got pitched up where he is now."

"As like to be pitched into the moon," rejoined another, contemptuously. "Why, that there precipice is three times as high as the tauntest mast ever rigged."

"Perhaps, now," suggested a third, "it's some awful cruel skipper, who's been a hazing and ill-using of his crew till they couldn't bear with it no longer, and was drove to mutiny, and put him ashore there, all alone, to die by himself, so as they should not have his blood upon their hands; or maybe he was a murderer or a Yankee slave-keeper."

"Ah, Bill," growled out a previous speaker; "you've always got a good word to say for every one, you have."

It was a very old man who spoke next; one who was looked up to as a great authority on all such matters, although he was usually remarkably taciturn, and would never enter into an argument. He quietly deposited his quid in his hat; and, as this was always done preparatory to his making a speech, his shipmates waited in silence for him to begin.

"That there ice-island," he said at last, "wasn't launched yesterday, nor yet last year, nor the year before, perhaps; and, by the looks of him, he's been for a pretty long cruise in warm latitudes—last summer, maybe—and then come back home for the winter. If you look away yonder—there—just this side of that high point like a church steeple, only lower down, there's a place looks darker than the rest. Now, it's just there I expect that a great piece has broken off and drifted away; and I calculate 'twas lower and more shelving off—not so steep and rocky-like as it is now. 'Twas there that poor chap was cast ashore from ship or boat. He was trying to make his way up to the heights to take a look round, and hoist a signal, when he lay down and went asleep,

and never woke again; only, where he is now, you see, must have been covered with snow then, or he couldn't have kept his footing."

Having said thus much, he replaced the quid in his mouth and spoke no more.

There was no earthly use in waiting longer, and yet the captain seemed loth to give the order to fill and bear away.

"If the poor fellow had a spark of life in him, he would have moved before this, for it's six or seven hours since we first saw him. But if he did move, it would only be to slide down over the precipice, for no living thing could keep a footing on such a slope as that. And if there are any more of them we should have seen them before this time, although we could never get them off if we did."

Then pausing suddenly in his walk on the quarter-deck, he gave an order to get a gun ready forward, and presently came the answer:

"All ready with the gun, sir."

"Fire!"

In a few seconds the echo of the loud report resounded from the icy wall; for another instant all was still, and then came a noise like a rattling of loud thunder, proceeding from the centre of the berg.

The danger of our proximity to this vast object now became more and more apparent, and all sail was made to get a good offing. But we had barely proceeded a quarter of a mile when the same noise was heard again, only louder, more prolonged, and accompanied by a rending, crushing sound, the intensity and nature of which is perfectly indescribable. The vast island was parting in the middle, down the course of the deep valley before mentioned; and slowly and majestically the eastern half rolled over into the sea, upheaving what had been its base, in which were imbedded huge masses of rock covered with long sea-weed. The other part still remained erect, but was swaying to-and-fro, as if it also must capsize. This convulsion caused less foam and turmoil than might have been supposed, but raised a wave of such tremendous magnitude, that when it reached our ship she seemed about to be overwhelmed by a rolling mountain of water higher than our mast-heads. The good ship rose upon its crest, and before again sinking into the hollow, we saw the man upon the iceberg—still in the same posture—glide swiftly down the slippery incline—shoot over the edge of the precipice, and plunge into the raging surf.

A sensation of inexpressible relief was experienced by all: it had seemed so dreadful to sail away and leave him there, unburied and alone; now, at any rate, we had seen the last of him.

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LAI'D UP IN TWO LODGINGS.

FIRST, MY PARIS LODGING.

It has happened rather whimsically, and not very fortunately for me, that my first experience of living in furnished lodgings abroad, as well as in England, has occurred at the very time when an unexpected and tedious illness has rendered me particularly susceptible to the temporary loss of the comforts of home. I have been ill, alone, in furnished lodgings in Paris—ill, alone, on the journey back to England—ill, alone, again, in furnished lodgings in London. I am a single man; but as I have already intimated, I never knew what it was to enjoy the desolate liberty of the bachelor until I became an invalid. Some of my impressions of things and persons about me, formed under these anomalous circumstances may, perhaps, prove not altogether unworthy of being written down, while they are still fresh in my mind. From my own observation of the chances and changes of life, I am inclined to think that every man—provided he can make up his mind to speak the truth, simply and plainly—has it in his power to contribute something out of his own experience which may add, in a greater or less degree, to our general knowledge of Human Nature in its almost infinite varieties. In my own case, my contribution may be the merest mite; but, as anything is better than keeping even my one poor farthing's worth of information selfishly to myself, I will take a bold step, and cast it forthwith, as modestly as may be, into the general public store.

How I happen, for a temporary period, to be away from the home in which I have hitherto lived with my nearest relatives, and to which I hope soon to return, it is of no importance to the reader to know. Neither is it at all worth while to occupy time and space with any particular description of the illness from which I have been and am still suffering. It will be enough for preliminary purposes, if I present myself at once in the character of a convalescent visiting Paris, with the double intention of passing agreeably an interval of necessary absence from home, and of promoting, by change of air and scene, my recovery from a distressing and tedious, though neither a prostrating nor a dangerous, illness. When I add to this, that

although I lived alone in my French bachelor apartment, I had the good fortune at Paris, as afterwards in London, to be in the near neighbourhood of the most kind, attentive, and affectionate friends, I have said as much as is needful by way of preface, and may get on at once to my main purpose.

What my impressions of my apartment in Paris might have been, if I had recovered there according to my anticipations, I cannot venture to say; for, before I had got fairly settled in my new rooms, I suffered a sudden and distressing relapse. My life, again, became the life of an invalid, and my ways of thought and observation turned back disastrously to the old invalid channel. Change of air and scene—which had done nothing for my body—did nothing either for my mind. At Paris, as before in London, I looked at the world about me—gay and new, and, surprising as it was—purely from the sick man's point of view, or, in other words, the events that passed, the sights that appeared, and the persons who moved around me, interested or repelled me only as they referred more or less directly to myself and my own invalid situation. This curious narrowness of view, of which I am not yet well enough entirely to rid myself, though as conscious as another of the mental weakness that it implies, has no connection that I can discover with excessive selfishness or vanity; it is simply the result of the inevitable increase of a man's importance to himself which the very fact of sickness produces. My own sensations, as a sick man, fill up the weary blank of my daily existence when I am alone, and form the main topic of inquiry and conversation when my doctor and my friends enliven my solitude. The concerns of my own poor body, which do not, I thank heaven, occupy my attention for much more than one hour out of the twenty-four, when I am well, become the main business and responsibility of all my waking moments, now that I am ill. Pain to suffer, and the swallowing of drugs and taking of nourishment at regulated periods; daily restraints that I must undergo, and hourly precautions that I am forced to practice, all contribute to keep my mind bound down to the level of my body. A flight of thought beyond myself and the weary present time—

even supposing I were capable of the exertion—would lead me astray from the small personal rules and regulations on which I depend absolutely for the recovery of my health. There is no help for me: it is one of the conditions of my sick existence that I must think of myself, and look through myself at all that goes on around me. This practice may seem, to persons in health, suggestive of anything rather than advantage to a man's temper and disposition. But, however my illness may have weakened me mentally, I cannot think that it has, morally, done me much harm. I certainly envy no other man's health and happiness. I feel no jealous pang when I hear laughter about me. I can look at people out of my window, running easily across the road, while I can hardly crawl from one end of my chamber to the other, without feeling insulted by their activity. Still, it is true, at the same time, and it must be owned, that I warm to people now exactly in proportion as I see them sensibly and sincerely touched by my suffering condition; and that I like, or dislike, my habitation for the time being, just as it happens to suit, or not to suit, all the little requirements of my temporary infirmity. If I were introduced to one of the most eminent men in the country at this moment, and he did not look sorry to see me ill, I should never care to set eyes on the eminent man again. If I had a superb room with the finest view in the world, but no bed-side conveniences for my pill-boxes and medicine-bottles, I would leave that superb room and fine view, and go cheerfully to a garret in an alley, provided it adapted itself comfortably to the arrangement of my indispensable invalid's lumber. This is doubtless a humiliating confession; but it is well that I should make it once for all; for, the various opinions and impressions which I am about frankly to write down, will be found to be more or less coloured by what I venture to describe as the involuntary egotism of a sick man.

Let us see how my new lodging in Paris suits me; and why it is that I immediately become quite fond of it.

I live in a little building of my own, called a Pavilion. Outside, it resembles, as to size, brightness, and apparent insubstantiality, a private dwelling-house in a Pantomime. I expect as I drive up to it, for the first time, to see Clown grinning at the door, and Harlequin jumping through the window, to the accompaniment of lively music of the most agreeably unclassical kind. A key is produced, and a wonderful little white door, through which no fat man could penetrate even sideways, is opened; I ascend a steep flight of a dozen steps, and enter my toy-castle: my own, independent, solitary, miniature mansion. The first room is the drawing-room. It is about the size of a large packing-case, with a gay looking-glass and clock, with bright red chairs and sofa, with a cosy

round table, with a big window looking out on another Pavilion opposite, and on a great house set back in a courtyard. Being a very small apartment, it has (or it would not be a French room) three doors. One I have just entered by. Another leads into a bed-chamber of the same size as the drawing-room, just as brightly and neatly furnished, with a window that looks out on the everlasting gaiety and bustle of the Champs Elysées. The third door leads into a dressing-room half the size of the drawing-room, and having a fourth door which opens into a kitchen half the size of the dressing-room, but of course possessing a fifth door which leads out again to the head of the staircase. As no two people meeting in the kitchen could possibly pass each other, or remain in the apartment together without serious inconvenience, the two doors leading in and out of it may be pronounced useful as well as ornamental. Into this quaint little culinary crevice the coal merchant, the wood merchant, and the water-carriers squeeze their way, and find a doll's cellar and cistern all ready for them. They might be followed, if I were only well enough to give dinners, by a cook and his scullions—for I possess, besides the cellar and cistern, an elaborate charcoal stove in the kitchen, at which any number of courses might be prepared by any culinary artist of slim figure and robust constitution, who could cook composedly with a row of small fires under his nose and a lukewarm wall against his back. Every room in my tiny dwelling is precious to me; but the Benjamin of my small architectural family is this kitchen. When my spirits are low I look into it, and call up imaginatively the figure of a restless gesticulating French cook, composing made-dishes excitably, with my kitchen-range roasting his stomach, my coal-cellar forcing itself between his legs, and my cistern scrubbing his shoulder. I call up this vision any day I like, and always retire from the contemplation of it, quite vivacious for a sick man.

But what is the main secret of my fondness for the Pavilion? It does not, I am afraid, lie in the brightness and elegance of the little rooms, or even in the delightful independence of inhabiting a lodging, which is also a house of my own, where I can neither be disturbed nor overlooked by any other lodgers. The one irresistible appeal which my Parisian apartment makes to my sympathies consists in the perfect manner in which it fits my wants and flatters my weaknesses as an invalid. I have quite a little druggist's stock-in-trade of physic-bottles, glasses, spoons, card-boxes, and prescriptions; I have all sorts of queer vestments and coverings, intended to guarantee me against all variations of temperature and all degrees of exposure, by night as well as by day; I have ready remedies that must be kept in my bedchamber, and elaborate applications that

I must find handy in my dressing-room. In short, I myself am nothing but the centre of a vast medical litter, and the closer the said litter revolves round me the more comfortable I am. In a house of the usual size, and in rooms arranged on the ordinary plan, I should be driven distracted (being an untidy man even in my healthiest moments) by mislaying things every hour in the day, by having to get up to look for them, and by being compelled to walk up and down stairs, or to make others do so for me, when I want to establish communications between dressing-room, bedroom, drawing-room, coal-cellar, and kitchen. In my tiny Parisian house of one small storey I can wait on myself with the most perfect ease; in my wee sitting-room nine-tenths of the things I want are within arm's length of me, as I repose in my elbow-chair; if I must move I can get from my bed-chamber to my kitchen in less time than it would take me to walk across an English drawing-room; if I lose my morning draught, mislay my noontide drops, or leave my evening pill-box under my afternoon dressing-gown, I can take my walking-stick or my fire-tongs, and poke or fish for missing articles in every corner of the room, without doing more than turning round in my chair. If I had been well and had given dinner parties, I might have found my habitation rather too small for me. As it is, if my Pavilion had been built on purpose for a solitary lodger to fall ill in with the least possible amount of personal discomfort, it could not have suited my sad case better. Sick, I love and honour the skilful architect who contrived it—well, I am very much afraid I should never have bestowed so much as a single thought on him.

Why do I become, in one cordial quarter of an hour, friendly, familiar, and (in my present weak way) affectionate, even, with my portress? Because I find, at our very first interview, that she is honestly sorry to see me deprived of all my anticipated Parisian pleasures, and sincerely anxious to soften my hard fate by every means in her power. It is, I suppose, part of my unhealthy condition of body and mind, that I like nothing so well as being pitied. My portress sweetens my daily existence with so much compassion that she does me more good, I think, than my doctor or my drugs. She is a thin, rapid, cheerful, little woman, with a tiny face and bright brown eyes. She has a husband (Mon Mari) and a son (Le Gamin), and a lodge of one room to live in with her family. She has not been in bed, for years past, before two or three in the morning; for my Pavilion and the second Pavilion opposite and the large house behind, are all shut in from the roadway by handsome iron gates, which it is the business of somebody in the porter's lodge to open (by pulling a string communicating with the latch) at all hours of the night to homeward-bound lodgers.

The large house has so many tenants that some one is always out at a party or a theatre—so the keeping of late hours becomes a necessary part of the service in the lodge, and the poor little portress is the victim who suffers as perpetual night-watch. Mon Mari (an estimable man, for whom I have a high respect and regard, having found him assiduous and compassionate) absorbs his fair share of work in the day, and takes the early-rising department cheerfully, but he does not possess the gift of keeping awake at night. By eleven o'clock (such is sometimes the weakness even of the most amiable human nature) it is necessary that Mon Mari should be stretched on his back on the nuptial bedstead, snoring impervious to all sounds and all in-comers. Le Gamin, or the son, is too young to be trusted with the supervision of the gate-string. He sleeps, sound as his father, with a half-developed snore and a coiled-up body, in a crib at the foot of the parental bed. On the other side of the room, hard by the lodger's keys and candlesticks, with a big stove behind her and a gaslight before her eyes, sits the faithful little portress, watching out the weary hours as wakefully as she can. She trusts entirely to strong coffee and the near flare of the gaslight to combat the natural sleepiness which follows a hard day's work begun at eight o'clock every morning. The coffee and the gas deserve, to a certain extent, the confidence she places in them. They keep her bright brown eyes very wide open, staring with unwinking pertinacity at the light before them. They keep her back very straight against her chair, and her arms crossed tightly over her bosom, and her feet set firmly on her footstool. But though they stop sleep from shutting her eyes or relaxing her limbs, they cannot prevent some few latent Morpbian influences from stealthily reaching her. Open as her eyes may be, the little woman nevertheless does start guiltily when the ring at the bell comes at last; does stare fixedly for a moment before she can get up; has to fight resolutely with something drowsy and clinging in the shape of a trance, before she can fly to the latch-string, and hang on to it wearily, instead of pulling at it with the proper wakeful jerk. Night after night she has now drunk the strong coffee, and propped herself up stiffly in her straight chair, and stared hard at the flaring gas-light, for nearly seven years past. Some people would have lost their tempers and their spirits under these hard circumstances; but the cheerful little portress has only lost her flesh. In a dark corner of the room hangs a daguerreotype likeness. It represents a buxom woman, with round cheeks and a sturdy waist, and dates from the period when she was the bride of Mon Mari, and was thinking of following him into the Porter's Lodge. "Ah! my dear sir," she says when I condole with her, "if

we do get a little money sometimes in our way of life, we don't earn it too easily. Aïe ! Aïe ! Aïe ! I should like a good sleep : I should like to be as fat as my portrait again !”

The same friendly relations—arising entirely, let it always be remembered, out of my illness and the portress's compassion for me—which have let me into the secrets of the strong coffee, the daguerreotype portrait, and the sleepy constitution of Mon Mari, also enable me to ascertain, by special invitation, how the inhabitants of the lodge dispose of some of the hardy-earned profits of their situation. I find myself suffering rather painfully, one morning, under some aggravated symptoms of my illness, and my friend the portress comes into the Pavilion to talk to me and keep up my spirits. She has had an hour's extra sleep, for a wonder, and is in a chirping state of cheerfulness in consequence. She shudders and makes faces at my physic-bottles ; entreats me to throw them away, to let her put me to bed, and administer A Light Tea to begin with, and A Broth to follow (un Thé léger et un Bouillon). If I will only stick to these remedies, she will have them ready, if necessary, every hour in the day, and will guarantee my immediate restoration to health and strength. While we are arguing the question of the uselessness of drugs and the remedial excellence of tea and broth, Mon Mari, with a look of mysterious triumph, which immediately communicates itself to the face of his wife, enters the room to tell her that she is wanted below in the lodge. She goes to his side and takes his arm, as if he was a strange gentleman waiting to lead her down to dinner, nods to him confidentially, then glances at me. Mon Mari follows her example, and the two stand quite unconfusedly, arm-in-arm, smiling mysteriously upon me and my physic-bottles, as if they were a pair of lovers and I was the venerable parent whose permission and blessing they were waiting to receive.

“Have you been getting a new doctor for me ?” I ask, excessively puzzled by their evident desire to connect me with some secret in the lodge.

“No,” says the portress, “I believe in no doctors. I believe in nothing but a light tea and a broth.”

“And I also !” adds Mon Mari, parenthetically.)

“But we have something to show you in the lodge,” continues the portress.

(Mon Mari arches his eyebrows, and says “Aha !”)

“And when you feel better,” proceeds my cheerful little friend, “only have the politeness to come down to us, and you will see a marvellous sight !”

Here Mon Mari warningly depresses his eyebrows.

“Enough,” says the portress, understanding him ; “let us retire.”

And they leave the room immediately, still arm-in-arm—the fondest and most mysterious married couple that I have ever set eyes on.

That day, I do not feel quite strong enough to encounter great surprises ; so my visit to the lodge is deferred until the next morning. Rather to my amazement, the portress does not pay me her usual visit at my waking, on the eventful day. I descend to the lodge, wondering what this change means, and see three or four strangers assembled in the room which is bed-chamber, parlour, and porter's office, all in one. The strangers, I find, are admiring friends : they surround Mon Mari, and all look one way with an expression of intense pleasure and surprise. My eyes follow the direction of theirs ; and I see, above the shabby little lodge table, a resplendent new looking-glass in the brightest of frames. On either side of it, rise two blush-coloured wax tapers. Below it are three ornamental pots with blooming rose-trees in them, backed by a fanlike screen of fair white paper. This is the surprise that was in store for me ; and this is also the security in which the inhabitants of the lodge have invested their last hard-earned savings. The whole thing has the effect upon my mind of an amateur High Altar ; and I admire the new purchase accordingly with such serious energy of expression, that Mon Mari, in the first sweetness of triumph, forgets the modesty proper to his position as proprietor of the new treasure, and apostrophises his own property as Magnifique, with a power of voice and an energy of gesticulation which I have never noticed in him before. When his enthusiasm has a little abated, and just as I am on the point of asking where my friend the portress is, I hear a faint little voice speaking behind the group of admiring friends :

“Perhaps, Messieurs et Mesdames, you think this an extravagance for people in our situation,” says the voice, in feebly polite tones of apology ; “but, alas ! what would you have ? It is so beautiful—it brightens the room so—it gives us such an air. And, then, it is also a property—something to leave to our children—in fine, a pardonable extravagance. Aïe ! I am shaking all over again ; I can say no more !”

While these words are in course of utterance, the group of friends separate, and I see sitting behind them, close to the big stove, the little portress, looking sadly changed for the worse. Her tiny face has become very yellow ; her bright brown eyes look disproportionately large ; she has an old shawl twisted round her shoulders and shivers in it perpetually. I ask what is the matter, imagining that the poor little woman has got a fit of the ague. The portress contrives to smile as usual before she answers, though her teeth are chattering audibly.

“You will not give me drugs, if I tell you ?” she says.

"I will do nothing that is not perfectly agreeable to you," I reply evasively.

"It is a powerful indigestion (une forte indigestion)," continues the portress, indicatively laying one trembling fore-finger on the region of her malady. "And I am curing myself with a Light Tea." Here the fore-finger changes its direction and points to a large white earthenware teapot, with an empty mug by the side of it. To save the portress the trouble of replenishing her drinking vessel, I pour out a dose of the Light Tea. It is a liquid of a faint straw colour, totally unlike any English tea that ever was made; and it tastes as a quart of hot water might taste after a wisp of hay had been dipped into it. The portress swallows three mugsful of her medicine in my presence, smiling and shivering; looking rapturously at the magnificent new mirror with its attendant flower-pots and tapers, and rejecting with grimaces of comic disgust, all overtures of medical help on my part, even to the modest offering of one small pill. An hour or two later, I descend to the lodge again to see how she is. She has been persuaded to go to bed; is receiving, in bed, a levée of friends; is answering, in the same interesting situation, the questions of all the visitors of the day to all the lodgers in the house; has begun a fresh potful of the light tea; is still smiling; still shivering; still contemptuously sceptical on the subject of drugs. In the evening I go down again. The tea-pot is not done with yet, and the hay-flavoured hot water is still pouring inexhaustibly into the system of the little portress. She happens now to be issuing directions relative to the keeping awake of Mon Mari, who, for this night at least, must watch by the gate-string. He is to have a pint of strong coffee and a pipe; he is to have the gas turned on very strong; and he is to be further excited by the presence of a brisk and wakeful friend. The next morning, just as I am thinking of making inquiries at the lodge, who should enter my room but the dyspeptic patient herself, cured, and ready to digest anything but a doctor's advice or a small pill. Mon Mari, I hear, has not fallen asleep over the gate-string for more than half-an-hour, every now and then; and the portress has had a long night's rest. She does not, however, consider this unusual occurrence as reckoning in any degree among the agencies which have accomplished her rapid recovery. It is the light tea alone that has done it; and, if I still doubt the inestimable virtues of the hot hay-water cure, then of all the prejudiced gentlemen the portress has ever heard of, I am the most deplorably obstinate in opening my arms to error and shutting my eyes to truth.

Such is the little domestic world about me, in some of the more vivid lights in which it presents itself to my own peculiar view. As for the great Parisian world outside, my

experience of it is bounded by the prospect I obtain of the Champs Elysées from my bedroom window. If I had been in health, I might have found everything to interest me, and much to write about, in the wonderfully gay view, with its ever-changing human interest, on which I can look, whenever I like, from morning to night. But the same cause which attaches me to my apartment and familiarly connects me with my porter and portress, also contributes to narrow the range of my observation when I look out of window. Fashionable Paris spins and prances by me every afternoon, in all its glory; but what interest have healthy princes and counts and blood-horses, and blooming ladies, plunged in abysses of circumambient crinoline, for me, in my sick situation? They all fly by me in one confused phantasmagoria of gay colours and rushing forms, which I look at with lazy eyes. The sights I watch with interest are those only which seem to refer in some degree to my own invalid position. My sick man's involuntary egotism clings as close to me when I look outward at the great highway, as when I look inward at my own little room: thus, the only objects which I now notice attentively from my window, are, oddly enough, chiefly those which I should have missed altogether, or looked at with indifference if I had occupied my bachelor apartment in the enviable character of a healthy man.

For example, out of the various vehicles which pass me by dozens in the morning, and by hundreds in the afternoon, only two succeed in making anything like a lasting impression on my mind. I have only vague ideas of dust, dashing, and magnificence in connection with the rapid carriages, late in the day, and of bells, rumbling, and hollow yelping of carters' voices in connection with the deliberate waggons early in the morning; but I have, on the other hand, a very distinct remembrance of one sober brown omnibus, belonging to a Maison de Santé, and of a queer little truck which carries baths and hot water to private houses, from a bathing establishment near me. The omnibus, as it passes my window at a solemn jog-trot, is full of patients getting their airing. I can see them dimly, and I fall into curious fancies about their various cases, and wonder what proportion of the afflicted passengers are near the time of emancipation from their sanitary prison on wheels. As for the little truck, with its empty zinc bath and barrel of warm water, I am probably wrong in sympathetically associating it as frequently as I do with cases of illness. It is doubtless often sent for by healthy people, too luxurious in their habits to walk abroad for a bath. But there must be a proportion of cases of illness to which the truck ministers; and when I see it going faster than usual, I assume that it must be wanted by some person in a fit; grow suddenly agitated by the idea, and watch the empty bath and the hot-water

barrel with breathless interest, until they rumble away together out of sight. So, again, with regard to the men and women who pass my window by thousands every day; my view of them is just as curiously circumscribed as my view of the vehicles. Out of all the crowd, I now find, on taxing my memory, that I have noticed particularly just three people (a woman and two men), who have chanced to appeal to my peculiar invalid curiosity. The woman is a nursemaid, neither young nor pretty, very clean and neat in her dress, with an awful bloodless paleness in her face, and a hopeless consumptive languor in her movements. She has only one child to take care of—a robust little girl of cruelly active habits. There is a stone bench opposite my window; and on this the wan and weakly nursemaid often sits, not bumping down on it with the heavy thump of honest exhaustion, but sinking on it listlessly, as if in changing from walking to sitting she were only passing from one form of weariness to another. The robust child remains mercifully near the feeble guardian for a few minutes, then becomes, on a sudden, pitilessly active again, laughs and dances from a distance, when the nurse makes weary signs to her, and runs away altogether, when she is faintly entreated to be quiet for a few minutes longer. The nurse looks after her in despair for a moment, draws her neat black shawl, with a shiver, over her sharp shoulders, rises resignedly, and disappears from my eyes in pursuit of the pitiless child. I see this mournful little drama acted many times over, always in the same way, and wonder sadly how long the wan nursemaid will hold out. Not being a family man, and having nervously-acute sympathies for sickness and suffering just now, it would afford me genuine satisfaction to see the oppressed nurse beat the tyrannical child; but she seems fond of the little despot; and, besides, she is so weak that if it came to blows, I am afraid, grown woman as she is, that she might get the worst of it.

The men whom I observe are not such interesting cases; but they exhibit, in a minor degree, the peculiarities that are sure to attract my attention. The first of the two is a gentleman—lonely and rich, as I imagine. He is fat, yellow, and gloomy, and has evidently been ordered horse-exercise for the benefit of his health. He rides a quiet English cob; never has any friend with him; never—so far as I can see—exchanges greetings with any other horseman; is never smiled at from a carriage, nor bowed to by a foot-passenger. He rides with his flaccid chin sunk on his fat breast; sits his horse as if his legs were stuffed and his back boneless; always attracts me because he is the picture of dyspeptic wretchedness, and always passes me at the same mournful jog-trot pace. The second man is a police agent. I cannot sympathise with him in consequence of his

profession; but I can observe, with a certain lukewarm interest, that he is all but worked to death. He yawns and stretches himself in corners; sometimes drops furtively on to the stone bench before my window; then starts up from it suddenly, as if he felt himself falling asleep the moment he sat down. He has hollow places where other people have cheeks; and, judging by his walk, must be quite incapable of running after a prisoner who might take to flight. On the whole, he presents to my mind the curious spectacle of a languid man trying to adapt himself to a brisk business, and failing palpably in the effort. As the sick child of a thriving system he attracts my attention. I devoutly hope that he will not return the compliment by honouring me with his notice.

Such are the few short steps that I take in advance to get a moderately close glance at French humanity. There are, of course, other passengers, whom I look after day by day with something like curiosity; but they make no lasting impression on my memory. What I have written thus far, honestly reproduces the small sum of my really vivid impressions of people and things in Paris, in-doors and out. If my view is absurdly limited to my own dim horizon, this defect has at least one advantage for the reader: it prevents all danger of my troubling him with my ideas and observations at any great length. If other people value this virtue of brevity in writers, orators, and preachers as sincerely as I do, perhaps I may hope, on account of my short range of observation and my few words, to get another hearing, if I write the second chapter of my invalid experiences. I began the first half of them (as herein related) in France; and I am now completing the second (yet to be recorded) in England. When the curtain rises on my sick-bed again, the scene will be London.

MINERALS THAT WE EAT.

IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER THE SECOND.

METAPHYSICIANS in speculating upon the diverse operations of the human mind, have spoken of man as a microcosm—a little world typifying the outer creation, and epitomising its phenomena. The physiologist, in examining his form and physical endowments, may repeat the expression with a more definite meaning; for he can trace in the single individual a reflex of the forms which people, the laws which regulate, and the elements which compose the entire material world. The investigation of the form of man has made it clear that the skeleton of man, having been fashioned after a certain type, other animals are constructed after the same model, with less elaborate detail and narrower capabilities. The series of created beings radiate from the type of structure which man presents; and the first link in the laws which control their existence and bind them together in one

harmonious chain of life, are attached to this grand human form ; which rises as a central pillar in the wide area of being. The appreciation of the chemical changes which are coincident with the life of man, yields a knowledge of the system of laws which govern the chemistry of the earth. The analysis of the elements which build up the human frame, not only brings into view the close ties of relationship which bind humanity to earth by similitude in composition, but it throws a light upon the physical endowments which we possess ; upon the power which we extend over the creatures of the earth ; and upon the privileges which we enjoy in their use.

By examining the composition and form of the teeth and digestive apparatus, the anatomist has been able to declare, that the structure of the human race bears the seal of fitness for a combination of animal and vegetable diet ; testifying to the power which has been given to us over the beast of the field, as well as over the herb on which it grazes. And, from the examination of the chemical constitution of the body, it might be predicated that, to man, has been granted dominion over land and over sea ; that he is to find in each a feeding-ground ; and that the inhabitants of the one and the products of the other are alike destined to be supplementary to his wants and subservient to his will. For if—after ascertaining that salt, the mineral of the sea, lurks in the recesses of the frame, and ranks among the minerals which we eat—we extend further the inquiry, potassium, the mineral of the land, falls at once under our observation.

Potash presents itself in the human system as frequently as sodium. Its presence in large proportion in the globules of the blood indicates a special importance ; because, in all probability, it is this portion of the blood which is organised, and assumes the form of muscle. Of course we ask here, too, those questions—Why ? and How ? We have not the same positive data of information as to the uses of potash, which we had of the utility of salt. Thus much may be said about it :—

We eat large quantities of potash in all our vegetable food ; in bread, potatoes, carrots, and especially in green vegetables. For, just as sea-plants contain a great deal of salt, so inland plants feed on potassium. And as inland animals consume these plants, so their flesh abounds in the same mineral. When inland plants are burned, potassium is left behind in the ash, in an oxidised form, and is known as potash, or oxide of potassium. In this form it has furnished many names of drugs to the Pharmacopœia. A medical man must blush for the reputation of his profession, when he calls to mind the history of potash as a pharmacopœial substance. Grave and venerable physicians of a hundred years since with ivory-handled sticks heavy square

wigs, and preternatural solemnity of countenance, were caught in a terrible snare when they handled this potash. They burnt various inland plants, and carefully collected the ash, storing it in mystic and many-coloured bottles, calling it salt of beanstalk, or salt of wormwood, or salt of willow, according to the source from which it was obtained. They were very careful to note the season at which the wormwood was to be collected, and the willow cut. They enjoined an hour for the process of combustion of the one, and a half-an-hour for the burning of the other. The temperature was to be raised in one case to one hundred and ninety degrees, and in another to two hundred degrees. And thus, since they believed each to be a different salt, they found no difficulty in differentiating their properties and distinguishing their actions. The one cured headaches, the other cured fevers, and a third cured indigestion. They would no more have thought of administering their so-called salt of wormwood when the symptoms called for salt of tartar, than a homeopathist would think now of prescribing a thousandth part of a grain of charcoal, when the urgency of the case called for a thousandth of a grain of plumbago. But—sad destruction to our veneration for big wigs and ivory sticks, and dogmatic experience—it was shown that potash was simply potash ; always the same, and never anything else than oxide of potassium.

The uses of potash in the body have been elucidated in investigating the causes of scurvy. Until lately, this scourge carried off from one-sixth to one-tenth of a ship's crew on a long voyage. Scurvy results from a continued diet of salt meat ; not because the salt is in excess, but because the potash and other mineral constituents are in defect. When meat is placed in brine, the salt enters, driving out the potash and other salts, usurping their place, and, like other usurpers, doing a vast amount of mischief. Lemon-juice and lime-juice were found to be preventive of scurvy, and were powerfully recommended. But Jack Tar has a fine British element of practical obstinacy. Ship captains disliked disturbing the vested interests of scurvy. The British sailor would cease to be a match for any dozen furrineers, if he were to cease eating salt junk, straining his water through his teeth, sleeping in close hammocks, and braving scurvy and typhus fever. But the law, after a time, enforces the use of lime-juice ; yet this was expensive, so citric acid was substituted. Citric acid failed. Then Dr. Garrod bethought him that lemon-juice contains potash as well as citric acid ; and, since it was not the citric acid which was doing good, probably it was the potash. Other concurrent facts strengthened the belief. Scurvy occurred in institutions with abundant dietary and deficient only in potash. Cocoa, and potatoes, and some other things

which possessed what we may call a scurvy reputation, were found to contain large quantities of potash. Citrate of potash then was recommended, and has been used with benefit as a curative agent. But the full practical application of these investigations is yet in abeyance. If it was difficult before to persuade Jack Tar to use lemon-juice, it is now impossible to induce him to substitute anything for it. The lemon-juice idea has taken possession of him, and it is impossible to squeeze it out of him. Mr. Busk, the accomplished surgeon of the Dreadnought, where so many cases of scurvy are treated, has been asked to introduce super-tartrate of potash. But he said, "When these poor men come on board, craving and longing for lemon-juice, fresh beef, mealy potatoes, and green vegetables, if I should offer them more junk and citrate of potash, they would raise a mutiny and burn the ship and me in it." And so the dietetic history of potash will remain incomplete until the Dreadnought be made fire-proof, or sailors be freed from prejudice. One practical remark may be here added. Potash, like the other organic elements, abounds in fresh fruits and vegetables. In boiling these we dissolve out the salts, and we do wrong to boil all our vegetables, and to avoid ripe fruits and fresh salads. With ordinary digestive capabilities, these are valuable additions to our diet, and are considerably used in France with excellent results.

The metals which most predominate in the human composition are not those which an observer of human nature would predicate. Iron is invariably present in the blood. It has been supposed that it gave to blood its red colour; it certainly intensifies the colour. We constantly meet with the proof. Every day, in the out-patients' department of the hospitals, and in ordinary medical practice, one finds patients with pale lips, and cheeks that have lost their glow, pallid and debilitated, complaining of difficulty in breathing, incapability of exertion, and a host of other symptoms. The history of the case is written in the colourless face. There is a want of iron in the blood. Supply iron to the system, and the colour reappears, while all the bad symptoms vanish. Supply it in any form,—tartrate of iron, sulphate of iron, potassio-tartrate of iron, chalybeate waters (tasting, according to the grave authority of Sam Weller, so strongly of warm flat-irons): a classic would say, restore the iron circulation, and you bring back a Spartan state of health. In the more vigorous words of Shakspeare:

Give them great meals of beef, and iron and steel,
They will eat like wolves and fight like devils!

Beef contains a great deal of iron; its ash contains six per cent. Animal food is, of course, the natural source of iron to the system. But iron has been used medicinally since very early times, with the knowledge

that it had a strengthening power. Prince Iphicles was the first patient who was treated with steel-wine. He suffered from pallor and debility thirty-five hundred years ago. An oracle desired him to seek a knife which, years before, he had driven into a sacred chestnut-tree, to steep it in wine, and drink the solution of its rust. A modern oracle would have prescribed a more elegant form of steel-wine for the fee of one guinea. Since that time, the alchymists called it Mars.

A lunatic friend of Dr. Winslow imagined that his stomach required strengthening by iron. He followed out his theory heroically; for, in his stomach were found, nails, iron tacks, rivets, iron wire, an iron screw, a brass image of a saint; and part of the blade of a knife, the whole weighing twenty ounces; "the which" (like the Maid of Orleans) "out of a great deal of old iron, he chose forth."

Every museum contains specimens of iron from the stomach of an ostrich. Of course, we do not swallow iron in the solid form, like ostriches; but we swallow it dissolved in water, the universal solvent. Reaching the tissues in this form, it constitutes an ingredient of the colouring matter or hæmatine found in the red corpuscles of the blood that bears the proportion of seven per cent. It exists also in the liquor sanguinis in which they float, as well as in muscle, hair, and most other structures of the body. The uses which it serves are best deduced from the symptoms which its deficiency occasions. On the theories as to its respiratory influence it is wise to be dumb; although they bear the great name of Liebig as their exponent, they can hardly be accepted, and we hold it to be a golden rule that none but sound and proved views should be advanced, except to professional readers. Suffice it to say, that iron is found in all our food; that iron is organised in all our tissues. That its presence is necessary to health, its absence productive of chlorosis, a common form of disease. But, although so generally present, and so essential to health, the whole bulk of iron in the body is very small. If we should carry into action Shakspeare's idea, and "coin the heart and drop the blood for drachmas," we should be but very little the wealthier. All the iron in the body would not be of the value of a halfpenny, nor the size of a walnut;—on such small things does life depend.

Yet, although iron be present in scant quantity, it might be thought that silica, or flint, would be more plentiful. But the amount of silica is really very small. Silicon is the base of flint and granite; it is, as will readily be believed, insoluble, and excessively hard; when deposited in the body, it serves only mechanical uses. It is found in the hair (more in brown hair than any other), in the nails, in the bones, and in the enamel of the teeth. It has been

detected in the blood by Millon, and in the bile by Weber. Silica reaches us in our vegetable food, particularly in salad plants and cereal grasses. After a haystack has been burnt down, there is often found a sort of rough glass at the bottom of the charred heap. Philosophers have suggested that the stack was consumed by lightning, and the falling *aërolite* molten. Practical farmers have hinted at an incendiary with matches in a glass bottle. But the botanist refers to the silica contained in the hay and wheat, and shows that it is this which has been molten by the fire into flint-glass.

The analogues of human hair are birds' feathers, and silica is here found plentifully; most plentifully in the wing-feathers, where strength is required for purposes of flight. If, like *Coriolanus*, we could have "no softer cushion than the flint," it would be in the form of feathers that the stony pillow would be most acceptable.

Of magnesia we have but little to say. It is always found in the human body. But what it does there, and why it is there, and in what precise form, are questions not yet clearly answered. Probably magnesia has the same qualities as potash and sodium, and does their work occasionally, when from an ill-selected diet these are absent from the body without leave. The dietetic relation of magnesia has been made famous by its discovery in oats. You could with difficulty form an idea of the ecstasy of that happy Gael who achieved this brilliant result. It appears that the acute minds of certain Scotch philosophers, long oppressed by the sense of the mental and physical superiority of their race, had been baffled in investigating its cause. They could find no satisfactory scientific explanation of the pre-eminence of the men on the north of the Tweed over the degenerate Southron, the puzzling difference 'twixt Tweed-ledum and Tweed-ledee; but at last this patriotic Scot announced that it was all accounted for by the quantity of magnesia which he eats in his oatcake. Probably those who admit the fact will not cavil at the explanation. A parallel speculation—which, we believe, claims an American origin—goes to show that differences in race and colour spring from varieties in elements of food, and that although it may be impossible to wash a blackamoor white, it might be possible to feed him white. These are philosophic bubbles, blown but to burst.

There remains a mineral beyond all others essential to life. If we may be permitted to recal the very common phrase by which man is said to be a brick, we would indicate the propriety of speaking of phosphate of lime as the mortar which completes the edifice. The phosphate of lime cements and stiffens the gelatine of the bones. It is the so-called bone-earth, to which the bones owe their stiffness and solidity. It is the phos-

phate of lime which renders them capable of supporting the weight of the body, protecting the delicate organs of life, and serving as levers on which the muscles may act. Phosphate of lime reaches us in all flesh, and in most articles of vegetable food, but especially in some of the cereals. A striking illustration of the value of phosphate of lime, as a constituent of our dietary, may be found in the fact that, nearly all the nations of the earth feed either on wheat or rye, or on barley or oats, and these grains appear to be specially adapted for human use, by reason of the large quantities of phosphate of lime which they contain. There is plenty of phosphate of lime in soups, and this may be a useful way of getting at this mineral, where there is a deficiency in the system.—For this phosphate is a necessary constituent of all the soft tissues and fluids of the body,—of cartilage, muscle, milk, blood, of gastric and pancreatic juices. In all these it is not mechanically dissolved or deposited, but is so united with their inmost structural elements, that it is difficult to isolate it. Lehmann thinks it obvious that this substance plays an important part in the metamorphoses of the animal tissues, and especially in the formation and subsequent changes of the animal cells. But it is in bone that phosphate of lime plays the most important part. It forms more than one-half of the entire osseous mass; its proportions being nicely adjusted to the exigences of each part. In the skull—which guards the brain, the centre of the nervous system, the core and kernel of our life—the proportion of bone-earth amounts to sixty-seven per cent.; the defences here are strengthened, while in less important parts the per centage falls to forty-five. The law of its deposition may be stated thus:—Bone-earth is added in proportion to the thinness of the plate of bone to be strengthened, or the importance of the organ to be protected. When the natural balance is disturbed, when the phosphate of lime is insufficiently supplied or assimilated, a dreadful disease occurs, called rickets, which is characterised by bending of the bones, hideous deformity, pressure on, and destruction of, important organs, and, finally, death. The cure for this condition of bone is medicine containing the deficient ingredient—phosphate of lime. Bones which do not contain this substance are flexible; in fact, they are only gelatine remains. In the dentine of teeth we find sixty-six per cent. of phosphate of lime; in the enamel nearly ninety per cent.

But the mineral ingredients may not too greatly encroach upon organic structures; for, even here, death most often seizes upon those bones, which being most stiff with phosphate of lime, have the most earthy taint. Life is a constant battle between the dead matter of earth, which strives continually to free itself from the tyranny of organic laws, and the

chemical energies of the body, which incessantly force upon it forms proper for its use in the animal structures. For a time, the powers of gravitation, cohesion, and crystallisation are kept down and defied by the organising forces; but we forecast the end, we know that earth will triumph over the frame, the house built of dust will crumble, and the glories of the sacred temple of the soul fade into the palpable ruins of a mud-built tenement.

It is an impressive task to follow the steps of the chemist, and with fire, and capsule, and balance in hand, as he tracks the march of the conqueror, Death, through the domain of vital structure.

The moralist warns us that life is but the antechamber of death; that as, on the first day of life, the foot is planted on the lowest of a range of steps, which man scales painfully, only to arrive at the altar of corporeal death. The chemist comes to proclaim, that, from infancy to old age, the quantity of earthy matter continually increases. Earth asserts her supremacy more and more, and calls us more loudly to the dust. In the end a Higher Will interposes, the bond of union is unloosed, the immortal soul wings its flight upward to the Giver of all Being. Earth claims its own, and a little heap of ashes returns to the dust. It was a man. It is now dust; our ashes are scattered abroad to the winds over the surface of the earth. But this dust is not inactive. It rises to walk the earth again; perhaps to aid in peopling the globe with fresh forms of beauty, to assist in the performance of the vital processes of the universe, to take a part in the world's life. In this sense the words of Goëthe are strictly applicable.* "Death is the parent of life."

Nothing of us that doth fade
But doth suffer a slow change
Into something rich and strange.

FLOWERS OF BRITISH LEGISLATION.

It has sometimes happened that trust-money bequeathed for charitable purposes has come, in course of time, to be a little misapplied. Rectification having in such cases been occasionally needed, there have been instances of application for that purpose to the Court of Chancery; which, at the beginning of this century, was the only tribunal having cognisance of breaches of trust and other matters connected with charities. Some of the charities in question are but small; providing, for good works, say twenty, thirty, fifty pounds a-year. Therefore, whenever it came to pass that the money of any one of these small charities was misapplied, they who objected to the misapplication had to spend the entire funds, and something more from their own pockets, for a correction of abuses. Or, if it happened that a little business arrangement

had to be made for the benefit of the finances of the charity, consent of Chancery had to be asked for and had, at a price which did not leave much chance of profit on the whole transaction. Thus, there was a charity at Battle worth forty-eight pounds a-year;—the rent of a house conveyed to trustees. The trustees thought they would do wisely to sell the house, and invest the proceeds in the public funds. It was impossible to do this without application to the Court of Chancery. A bill was filed. It was referred to the master to say whether the sale would be beneficial to the charity. He said it would. The sale, therefore, took place, and the money was invested; whereupon there was a bill sent in for taxed costs to be paid out of the charity, equal to seven years income; being upwards of three hundred pounds!

Again, there was an estate at Lawford, in Essex, given for charitable purposes, and leased at sixty pounds a-year. Some persons thought the rent too little, and applied to the Court of Chancery to set the lease aside. No result was obtained except a subtraction from the funds of the charity for Chancery costs, to the amount of six hundred and fifty pounds.

The consequence of such a state of things was that, over and over again, charities were altogether lost. Surviving trustees frequently let them go to their heirs with other property; and there was, practically, no help or redress. Thus, for example, more than two centuries ago, there were six almshouses given at Ashby in Lincolnshire, to be supported by a rent-charge of thirty pounds a-year. Trustees were appointed, and once afterwards renewed, but not renewed again. The trustees all died, and the trust was at an end. Nevertheless, the land-owner's family, upon which the charge was laid, continued to pay for more than a century the thirty pounds a-year to the vicar, in order that he might distribute the funds according to the will of the founder of the charity. At last, however, in the year eighteen hundred and seventeen, the representative of the family then living was advised that, as there was no person authorised to give him a legal receipt, he could not, with what a lawyer might call safety, go on with the payments. They were discontinued. After several years, information was filed against him to obtain the payment of arrears, and also the re-appointment of trustees. The arrears, three hundred and seventy pounds, he was accordingly required by the Court of Chancery to pay up; out of them, however, costs to the amount of four hundred pounds were ordered to be paid; so that, to the charity, there became due fifteen pounds less than nothing.

This case, it will be seen, illustrates the action of the law subsequent to the year eighteen hundred and twelve. In that year Sir Samuel Romilly had introduced a bill designed to lessen the expense of Chancery to

* See Household Words, vol. viii. p. 433.

charitable trusts. This cheap method was thus described by a Lord Chancellor to the House of Lords: "A petition is presented to the Lord Chancellor; it is served on the opposite party, whose conduct is called in question; it comes on, on the appointed day; there is an array of two or three counsel on one side, and two or three counsel on the other. It is argued, perhaps, one, two, three and four successive days. Questions arise which have to be referred to the master; it goes into the master's office; litigation there continues; the master makes his report; the report is returned to the Chancellor; exceptions, perhaps, or objections, are made to the report; possibly the report is confirmed, possibly it is referred back to the master; and, after all, when the final order of the Chancellor is made, it is subject to appeal to your lordships' House."

Evidently this improved mode of proceeding, thus described by Lord Lyndhurst, however decided an advance upon previous routine, however comparatively economical, was still murder to little charitable trusts; and great was the number of the little ones, there being five-and-twenty thousand of them, whereof not one was of more value than fifty pounds a-year.

This being the state of affairs, Lord Brougham began, in the year eighteen hundred and eighteen, those efforts at reform which have been maintained as efforts, and but little more, from that time to the present, by the British legislature, at a cost to the nation, for talk, writing, and investigation upon this topic alone, of nearly a quarter of a million of money. Lord Brougham began his labours to procure cheap and available help to the due administration of small trusts, by asking for a commission to inquire into, and make completely known, the extravagant nature and the serious extent of the existing difficulty. The commissioners upon charitable bequests were then appointed, and worked year by year till they had filled with disclosures of the evil to be remedied, thirty-eight huge folio volumes, containing upwards of twenty-eight thousand pages. It was always imagined that this amount of reporting would be followed by some legislative measure. There was no hope for any bill unless it came directly from the government; and, seven years after the thirty-eighth volume of reports had appeared, government being pressed, promised to bring in a measure—next session.

Accordingly, in the succeeding year, Lord Lyndhurst, being at that time—twelve years ago—Lord Chancellor, a bill was introduced by government, at what our lawgivers call "that late period of the session" when bills, as they come in, leave their hope behind. The Bishop of London entreated the Lord Chancellor not to pass his bill through the committee during the present session; many of the bishops were out of town, and "no

measure," said his Grace, "affecting the Church, or the interests of education as connected with the Church, ought to be passed at a period of the session when they were unavoidably absent." The Lord Chancellor replied that "Some such measure had been recommended eight or ten years ago by the commissioners of inquiry into charitable bequests, but nothing successful had been done as yet with respect to it." He stated, however, that it was not his intention to proceed with the bill.

Earlier next year—eleven years ago—Lord Lyndhurst renewed his attempt to establish a tribunal that would administer justice in the case of all those small charities which can only be crushed by the machinery of Chancery. The measure was referred to a select committee of the Lords, amended, and—only not in due time—passed. It was too late to get through the delays of the Commons also, and thus, "in consequence of the late period, &c."—we all very well know the phrase—it came to an end with the session.

Next year—ten years ago—Lord Lyndhurst brought the proposed measure before the Lords in their own chosen shape, precisely what they had in the previous session settled that it ought to be. The legislative body being composed still of precisely the same men, they had only to send their bill on to the Commons speedily. But they had changed their minds. By that time, vested interests had shaken off their slumbers, and there were worshipful companies at work in getting up a cry and a good opposition. "In consequence," said Lord Lyndhurst, when he moved the second reading, "in consequence of an extensive combination throughout the country against the bill, I cannot but feel that a strong impression against it has been created in the minds of your lordships." Its purpose, be it remembered, was simply to provide—in the form of a commission of men competent to decide—a cheap tribunal for the settlement of disputes and other questions relative to the management of small trust funds. The opposition was most active from eleven of the nineteen city companies, against which eleven companies, as it appeared, nineteen informations had been filed in consequence of the report made by the charity commissioners of their mismanagement of funds. Thus, of a charity founded of old at Greenwich by an Earl of Northampton, to support twenty poor persons and a warden, and placed under the visitation of the Mercers' Company, which was to send down twelve visitors every Trinity Monday, at a cost for boat-hire and dinner of not more than five pounds, Lord Lyndhurst showed, by way of specimen, how much was eaten upon visitation day. The twelve visitors became eighteen, and this is a list—apart from the six carriages and pair, flowers, and so forth—a list of the things actually put, as an annual treat, into the stomachs of these members of

the corporation, at the cost of the small charitable trust:—Eighteen breakfasts at three shillings, with extra, two tongues, eggs, bacon, and Bath chap. Sixteen sandwiches, twelve lemonades, six punch, one and a half pints cherry-brandy, two and a half dozen soda, lemon, sugar. Four dishes of flounders, two ditto turbot, three ditto stewed eels, two ditto mullet, three ditto water-souchie, three ditto fried eels, three ditto eels tomatoes, two ditto salmon, one ditto spiced eels, two ditto collops of turbot, one ditto sturgeon, white-bait, potatoes, cucumbers, sauces. Two dishes boiled pullets and white sauce, two ditto ducklings, two ditto raised pies, two ditto hams, one dish of roast turkey poult, one ditto pigeon pie, two ditto geese, one ditto tongue, one ditto quarter of lamb, one ditto roast fowls, one capon. One baron of beef, two dishes of lamb cutlets, curry with rice, asparagus, peas, ditto stewed, Italian salads, prawns, rice, new potatoes, French beans, cauliflowers, lobster, cucumber, mushrooms, collar, garden beans, sauces and gravies, jellies, baskets, tarts, blancmange, custards, tourts, lemon pudding, plum puddings. Six quarts ice creams, two almond cakes, six pounds hot-house grapes, ten plates strawberries, six ditto oranges, six ditto almonds and raisins, four ditto preserved ginger, four ditto preserved nutmegs, four ditto biscuits, seven ditto olives, two dishes apples. That is what these eighteen gentlemen ate out of the charity in the name of inspecting, and they drank forty-one bottles of wine, taking from the charity, however, only a toll of one shilling on each bottle. The city companies, who thus enjoyed their work as good Samaritans, opposed with all their might a legislative measure that would make them answerable for their fulfilment of trusts before any authority more come-at-able than Chancery. "I appeal," said Lord Lyndhurst, on behalf of the bill which the assembled Lords had passed in the preceding year; "I appeal not to your compassion in favour of individuals, but to your sense of justice—a principle which has always been revered and considered sacred in this house. I call on your lordships by the love of justice, and on principles of humanity, to allow this bill to be read a second time, in order that its merits and details may be fairly discussed and considered in committee. . . . I shall indeed feel most mortified—I shall feel, I declare, most ashamed—if your lordships do not allow this bill to be read a second time." They did not. There happened to be just then a prime minister whom it was desirable to damage without turning him out, the companies therefore, for that year, carried the day by a majority of two.

In the next year, and the next year, and the next, three successive, and certainly most inadequate, attempts made by Lord Cottenham to deal with this—as an unenlightened member of the public might think altogether—

simple question, failed. It was then considered best to appoint another commission, and to have some more reports. The new commission began work therefore in the year eighteen hundred and forty-nine, and speedily reported that the administration of charitable trusts throughout the country required some supervision, and suggested certain provisions, which should be incorporated in a statute. In pursuance of this recommendation, a bill was introduced in the year eighteen hundred and fifty, which went through the House of Commons, but was too late for the House of Lords. In the following year, therefore, the bill went through the House of Lords, but was too late for the House of Commons. And again, in the year following that, it met with like misfortune.

Thus we have accounted for the wisdom of Parliament upon this matter from the year eighteen hundred and eighteen—when it was introduced for legislation by Lord Brougham, who has laboured annually, through all misadventures, to obtain for it a settlement from that remote year—to the year eighteen hundred and fifty-three. For five-and-thirty years—about the usual period of incubation—Parliament had been sitting upon the egg. At length the shell broke and out came "the Charitable Trusts Act, 1853." A large chick, but with the merest rudiments of legs and wings. An act of eight-and-sixty sections over which the vested interests had been extremely watchful during the discussion in committee, and out of which they had struck every clause that could enable it really to do the work it was especially created for.

No practical result followed from the passing of this Act, for none was possible. In less than a year afterwards (when money was voted for the purposes of the commission) a member of Parliament observed, that if the powers of the commissioners were really so limited as they were said to be, "it would be better at once to say to the public, it is impossible for us to interfere with the administration of the Court of Chancery, and therefore you are left in the same difficulties in which you have been placed ever since the report of the original charity commissioners." To which the home secretary replied, that the zeal of the new commissioners had been all that was to be desired, "but at the same time he must admit that the commissioners themselves felt that their powers were quite inadequate to the discharge of the duties which were expected from them." The Act, in short, though at length passed, was so passed that it would not work. A little experience of its defects would point the way to their amendment; and, said the home secretary, "no doubt a measure having this object would be laid before the house next session."

Next session, accordingly,—that is to say, about a twelvemonth since—the British

Parliament proceeded to discuss its "Charitable Trusts Act, 1852, Amendment Bill." The second of the new set of reports had pointed out the defects to be remedied, and an attempt was made to remedy them in the new measure, which after passing through select committee found its way to the House of Commons, where it was recommended to attention by Lord Palmerston, as having for its "real object, to vest the commissioners with certain powers of administration, which would prevent the necessity for long, expensive, and multiplied Chancery suits." In August of last year a debate was held upon it, wherein much was said of the late period of the session and of hurried legislation. An opposition then sprung up on the part of a body having no disinclination for long and expensive Chancery suits, the equity counsel, who are powerful in the lower house, and are called by the writer in the last number of the Law Magazine, whose very sensible article furnishes the ground-work for this chapter, and are called, according to an old professional joke, the honourable members for Chancery Lane. These gentlemen amused themselves over the drilling of holes into the unhappy Amendment Act; and, when it was made, if anything less able to hold water than the leaky measure for which it was to be substituted, the Amendment Bill of eighteen hundred and fifty-five, passing the Commons—went back to the Lords, where the loss of its essential provisions was deplored, and witness was borne to the skill of the professional gentlemen in another place who had again rendered the bill abortive. So the Amendment Act was passed, amending nothing; and an act to amend the amendment may, perhaps, be introduced next session.

OCEAN.

Oh, that this silver stream would bear my soul,
(Whilst, in abstracted mood, I watch'd some star)
Like sere leaf on its water's petty roll!

I would its devious windings follow far,
And never with one thought disturb its flow,

But, like a child in some beloved embrace,
Lie still and rest, and purest pleasure know

In looking to attain the wish'd-for place.

With thee, great Ocean, would I long to be;

Again to rest upon thy shell-strewn sand;

To list, like lover, to the melody

Of thy dear voice; to kiss the snowy hand

Which smoothes to pillows the rough beach; to fold

In my embrace thy rocks; in dreams, once more

To spend old hours with thee, and to behold

Thy face, reflecting Heaven as of yore.

To seek conceal'd wonders few would note,

The unheeded ripple, like an infant smile,

The shell of life deserted; or to float

On thy calm breast at evening, the while

No sound should startle the tranced air, and gaze

On minute forests and strange plants that grow

On thy sand-floor, where, folded in the maze

Of purple leaves, untended flowers blow.

To watch the evening shades and vapours dun

Gather like clouds of sorrow on thy face,

And to behold, perchance, the weary sun

Serenely sinking in thy kind embrace,

Like a most wayward child who will not rest,

Save on one breast; for thee, in silence deep,

To rock his cloudy cradle in the west,

And draw the curtain as he falls asleep.

To wait until the moon, in garments bright,

Enters the sky as a deserted town,

Changing the battlements to walls of light,

Whilst, scarcely seen, some starry-eyes look down,

With gentle greeting, as she glides along,

The Queen of Peace, with majesty elate;

But thou, as lonely echo some sweet song,

In thy clear breast dost mock her little state.

Like watcher by a slumbering child, to list

To thy low breathing, as thou sleepest by;

To see the distant vessel veild in mist,

Like spirit invoked of the moon on high;

To climb some rock, and calm my troubled mind,

The while unwearied tides pass on below,

Though all seem still, and there is no rough wind

To weave the dying wave a wreath of snow.

Thou, Ocean, art the same; but where are they

With whom I loved to haunt thy vocal shore?

Life's changes bore them from my path away,

And I may see those well-known forms no more:

Sad thought, no more to tread that glistening beach,

And watch thy troubled bosom heave and fall,

In their sweet presence,—for beyond my reach

Wafted are those dear hearts, and scatter'd all.

As if, far distant in the universe,

A group of planets, which to our short sight

Had seem'd a shining cloud, should all disperse,

Deserting their true paths of borrow'd light,

And, on the eternal ocean, circling far,

Seek island worlds; leaving their sun, bereft

Of their kind ministry, a wandering star,

To explore Heaven alone. So I am left.

I am left; and find solace in the dreams

Peopling my mind, as that deserted sun,

In the fair race with which its surface teems,

'Neath the bright awning human gaze would shun;

And when to thy breast, Ocean, my thoughts fly,

Like thy pure tribute for the thirsty ground,

Purged from pollution, they are drawn on high,

Where all my faithful lost ones shall be found.

THE NINTH OF JUNE.

IN TEN CHAPTERS. CHAPTER THE FIRST.

It amounted to an expostulation. A close four-wheeler for a gentleman like me, come down to Matlock Bath for the benefit of his health? Why, what fresh air could be got in a shut-up trap like that, he should like to know. No, no; a canter was the thing to suit my complaint; a canter on his old roan that had carried—ay, and cured,—many a gentleman that looked much more white about the gills than I did. She wasn't young, to be sure; but game as a three-year old, and uncommon quiet to drive or ride. The country for miles round was, as

everybody knew, a sight of itself, and who could see it in a stifling fly?

To give full vent to his feelings, the job-master released the gaping buttons from the great button-holes of his box-coat, and peeled off a fold or two of his bulbous cravat. I had not seen the whole of his face; for, as he had never looked up, I could only catch occasional glimpses of his forehead, as he smoothed down his hair with the flat of his hand, the rest of his features receding to a perspective of chin that lost itself in the depths of his loosened neckcloth. He spoke very earnestly—not to me—but to the crown of his hat; which he held close under his mouth that it might catch every word that he dropped.

"But I am not a good horseman," I said, letting down my deficiencies in that respect as gently as possible. I had never mounted a horse above twenty times in my life, and had tumbled off twice.

"That won't matter," he replied. "I don't like to brag"—here he made modest circles on the crown of his hat with his forefinger—"but, if anybody can show a gentleman how to ride, I can. When I left the army (I was in the twelfth hussars) I was riding-master to Bokicker's riding-school at Brighton, till I found an opening down here and took to the fly and job trade." Looking up and taking a furtive, and I hope accurate, inspection of my figure, he added, "You're just the build for horseback, you are; and how you've kept yourself out of the saddle all these years, is a wonder to me. But it's never too late to begin." In answer to a word of mine about the danger of the experiment, he said. "Look'ee here, sir—I'll ride the grey pony that I let with the phaëton to ladies for paying visits, and'll go with you. You shall mount the old mare; and if she don't take you along as easy as a Bath-chair, my name isn't Tom Hockle."

"I may depend upon your word that the creature has no tricks?"

Hurt at my momentary suspicion that he could have any sort of desire to see me break my neck, Mr. Hockle replied, "Bless you, sir! you might ride her with a thread of tailor's twist."

During this conversation in the front parlour of my lodging on the Museum Parade, I got the notion that the Flyman was a full-bodied person, up in years; for I had not noticed that his box-coat was too big for him, and that the tops of his boots were not particularly well filled out. When, therefore, I entered his stable-yard, and beheld a well-knit middle-aged man in a close short-tailed under-coat, drawing on a pair of doe-skin gloves; a switch-whip under his arm; his top-boots pulled neatly up over his leathers; his hat jauntily cocked to one side, and a lock of hair combed sprucely forward to the edge of each eye, I attributed the illusion respecting him to my timorous sensa-

tions on seeing the mare and pony ready saddled and bridled, and on overhearing him tell his man (adroitly speaking with the near side of his mouth, without shaking a sprig of the woodbine that sprouted out from the off side) "to take up another link of old Rufa's curb, in case she offered to bolt with the gent." But, having shut my eyes and desperately mounted without detecting the trace of a smile on the countenances of either of the spectators, my senses were sufficiently restored to perceive that the Flyman and the Ridingmaster was the same person, wholly changed in appearance by change of dress.

As we paced along, side by side—he on his low pony, I on the tall mare—past the High Tor, over Matlock Bridge, and round the Church Rocks, Mr. Hockle alternated his instructions in riding with descriptions of the scenery. "He was very fond of this country," he said, "for he was born at Crookston-Withers; and, having left home when a lad, only lately returned to the neighbourhood. The absence had made him like it all the more. That's Crookston Hall!" he said, pointing with his whip. "Sit more upright, sir!"

"You mean the stiff, ugly, red-brick house with stone dressings?" I asked, resenting the square, rigid edifice that obtruded itself—a prim impertinence—in the open and varied landscape.

"Well, I can't say much for the house," was the answer, "but it stands—Sink your heels, sir!—it stands on the prettiest spot hereabouts. We shall skirt the grounds presently. Out of the drawing-room window, you can see straight over the flower-garden, into this dingle. Pull up, sir,—gradually; don't jerk her, for she's apt to rear."

We had arrived on the rising ground beside Crookston Hall, and stopped to look between the trees over the shrubs and saplings, into a narrow dell that lay between the garden of Crookston Hall and the Derwent. Its troughlike bed was smoothly curved with green and bright grass; and, from each side, shot up straight and stately firs tipped with evergreen.

"You see that oak on the other bank, where the beeches are?"

After some little difficulty, I made it out.

"Well," continued the Flyman, "when I was a youngster, I went up that tree once too often."

"Bird's-nesting?"

"No, I had a right to be there; but I overheard things that have lasted me for life. Turn in your knees, sir!" We were ambling along again.

"Family secrets, perhaps," I hazarded, to take off Mr. Hockle's attention from the awkward figure I was making.

"Well, perhaps, they were. You see I was stable-boy at the Hall at first; afterwards, Mr. George Dornley the eldest son, took me to be

his groom. That was in the old Squire's time. Ah! things were very different then to what they are now. No flint-skinning; no selling of skim-milk, and cabbages, and fruit—Shorten the right hand bridle! You've drawn the snaffle right out of her mouth on 'tother side!—No hounding of beggars; no stopping up of footpaths across the park; lots of horses in the stable; and some sort of jollification always going on in the house.—You'll do no good unless you sink your heels!"

"The present proprietor is not very liberal, then?" I said.

"Liberal?" Mr. Hockle looked up at me quick and savage, as if I were the miser he had in his mind. "Liberal! I should say not. A cold-blooded, close-fisted, stingy tyke, with only one horse in his stable,—a mangy gelding, as lank as a hound, only not half so well-fed.—Turn in your knees more, and keep your elbows closer to your side!"

"But what about the tree?" We were now ambling under the deep shadows of Arch Lane.

"Well, I'll tell you." Mr. Hockle looked very serious.

"It's more than a few years ago now. There was a good deal of distress about at that time. Oats were sixty shillings a quarter: work was scarce, and too many to do what little there was; so there was rioting and rick-burning; though not half so much as the Government and the Government spies made out. The gentry were dead frightened of being burned in their beds—Sit more over your legs!—Yet the good jolly old squire went on just the same. Although the common people grumbled at the extravagance of the rich, never thinking how good it was for trade, he did not bate a single hunt-breakfast, or dinner, or jollification of any sort; and when his second son (he had two, George and Calder) was going to be married, there never had been such goings on. I heard tell, at the time, that that wedding cost the old man more than a thousand pound. Everybody, high and low, rich and poor, was invited; the dingle was half-covered with tents for stabling, to accommodate the visitors' cattle; and there was a marquee on the lawn, because the wedding breakfast had to be set out in the regular ball-room: one man from London was had down to cook, and another to let off fireworks: all the labourers in the parish had a day's pay; and they and their wives and young-uns had as much beef and beer as they could eat and drink. If the rioters themselves had come that way, I do believe the old Squire would have found feed and liquor for every one of 'em.—Don't hang on her bit so; give and take!"

"But you are a long time getting up that tree," I remarked, as a diversion.

"All in good time. You see the bride was a heiress, and there was a queer story about her and my master. The old Squire had, once, set

his heart upon Master George having her; he being the heir to Crookston. And Master George jilted her—he was wrong, I own; but he was my gov'nor, and a better master never sat in pig-skin. You should have seen how *he* sat a horse!" As Mr. Hockle emphasised this expression, he darted a glance at me out of the corner of his eye that had, I thought, a dash of contempt in it. "Well," he continued, "it was a settled thing, though I never thought it would come to anything; for it was a precious lazy pace we went at whenever we were bound for Stonard Abbey (it lies behind us; about two miles); and, when we got there, Mr. George never kept me long a leading the horses about; but back he came very soon, and sprang into the saddle smiling, because the visit was over, and always bucketed off back, at a hand gallop. I am sure courting at the Abbey must have been a cold job for him; for nobody—not even Miss Stonard that I saw—ever came to the door, to wave him a good-bye as he mounted. Sometimes we met Mr. Calder on his iron-grey, going to where we had come from: that was when we came home over the moor a mile or two round, through the village. There, I always had a long waiting job; for Mr. George never called on Mrs. Levine without having a long spell of talk with her and her daughter.—Give her her head more. Don't bore at her so!—Mrs. Levine was the widow of the last Crookston-Withers rector, and lived in a cottage at one corner of the churchyard: Corner Cottage they call it."

"Was this Miss Stonard of the Abbey handsome?" I asked.

"She wasn't bad-looking," Mr. Hockle replied. "She had good clean limbs; and her short petticoats (no offence meant) showed 'em. She was tall—seventeen hands I should say—and wore her hair cropped all round: for docking was quite the go for manes as well as tails at that time. She had good points in her face, too. Bright black eyes, white skin, a straight nose, broad nostrils, and wide jowls."

"Jowls, Mr. Hockle?"

"Well, jaws, then—all good points whether in a horse or a woman, mind you. But I didn't like her countenance. Her eyes were too clear and cold for my money. She could look at you as hard as nails, and petrify you a'most.—That's better! only close your fingers tighter upon the reins, and make a good fist of 'em!—Mr. George and his father never got on well together. The old Squire was high Tory, and his son was all for the rights of the people, and *would* wear a white hat (regular Radical, you know), and would make speeches at torch-light meetings, that his brother Calder, and his father, and Sir Bayle Stonard called treasonable. But how the poor loved him for it! Well, one day he had been letting out furiously at a great meeting at Wallsend, about the rascally goings

on of the government, and about the nobles calling the people, 'A swinish multitude;' so, when he came back to Crookston Hall there were terrible high words between him and his father. They got from politics to matrimony; till at last, Mr. George, in his passion, told the old gent that when he married, he would marry to please himself, and that it didn't please him to marry Miss Stonard. The old man burst out of the room in a tremendous rage, nearly broke a blood-vessel in putting on his boots, and galloped over to the Abbey, like split.—Shake her bridle, and wake her up a bit, sir! She is getting lazy.—As for Mr. George, he went to London on parliament business, and I went with him."

"But we are still a long way from the tree."

"Not so far as you think," continued Mr. Hockle. "To the old Squire's astonishment, things were taken very coolly at Stonard Abbey; and it was settled, after a while, that George should be cut by his father; and that the young lady—nothing loth, they used to say—should take up with t'other brother. They were better matched; for their sly but determined tempers suited one another; and she and Mr. George, with his straightforward honest disposition, would never have run in a curriole together. However, before the wedding-day, and just before Mr. George went abroad, there was a reconciliation, and he came home, and brought me with him. Then came the wonderful preparations. All of us had been up for two nights; and, the evening before the wedding, I was helping to put up the last stable tent in the dingle, when one of the men asked me to get into the oak I showed you, with a line that was to steady the centre tent-pole. I was to hold it there till he told me to fasten it; but I was so dead beat, that I hardly had strength. However, I scrambled up by the garden seat, and perched myself comfortably upon the lowermost branch, with my back against the trunk. If you'll believe me, I fell fast asleep in no time, with the line in my hand."

"I don't know whether I was left there for a lark, or whether I was forgot; but it was staring moonlight when I woke. I heard voices close under me: one was my master's. There he sat upon the garden-seat that went round the trunk of the tree, pressing something taper and white in his arm; and there was an uncommon pretty little hand clasping his shoulder. I can remember every word they spoke as well as if I was hearing them now."

"You had reason to remember, perhaps," I remarked.

"You'll see. The little hand pressed itself tighter and tighter, and the little arm trembled a good deal. The full moon made it light as day. I could see tears falling upon Mr. George's shoulder. He asked

if she was so frightened and sad on account of —, and he whispered something in her ear; but she turned away, letting the tears drop into her lap, and said No; she could afford to be blamed and gossiped about, and even persecuted, without a murmur; for she felt within her that both of them had no guilt to answer for. No; it was not that. She was frightened about him; and she looked piteously into Mr. George's face. He tried to laugh her out of her fears, and spoke of everything coming right by his next birth-day, the ninth of June, when, please God, he should return from Italy. After a minute or two, she said she dreaded what might happen between them, and that day. She knew what the bride was: she knew that she would do anything for spite; and it was not in her nature to forgive him for refusing to marry her. 'Then,' and she trembled worse than ever, 'when she finds out who her rival is, she will not rest till she has ruined us both.' Mr. George said he thought it was his brother who would be most to be feared, when he and all the world came to know—here he whispered again, and she looked down into her lap once more; but there were no tears this time. He kissed her; and she, coaxing and caressing him, entreated him not to go to any more dangerous political meetings. She was proud of his fame, and loved him with all her heart because he manfully helped in the cause of the poor man; but her mother had told her, over and over again, that Mr. Calder, in his cold-hearted way, was trying to make the old Squire believe that he would come to be hanged, and that he was already an outcast from what they called society. For the old Squire often dropped in at Corner Cottage to have a gossip with her mother—when she was able to sit up."

"I had been in the tree for so many hours, that at last I got cramped with the cold, and tried to alter my position. Forgetting I had the cord in my hand, I let the end of it fall. It came right down upon Mr. George's hat. They both started up; he still holding the young lady round the waist, to protect her. Of course I got down."

"You rascal, you have been listening!" he said.

"I owned I had."

"Who set you to be a spy upon me?" he halloed out. "Don't you eat my bread? Who set you to do this?" He was very quick-tempered, Mr. George was.

"I told him nobody had set me on. I told him how it happened. I told him I could not help hearing what I had heard; but I told him, too, that he had been a good master to me, and that all that I could understand of what I had heard I would solemnly swear should never pass my lips to any living soul. I meant what I said, and said it as if I meant it. The young lady looked at me all the time, and took my part and whispered,

in a low, tender voice, 'I think you may trust him, dear George,' and she left off struggling out of his arms, as if she was not afraid of my knowing everything that there was between them. I shall never forget her—never!"

Here the ex-groom fell into a reverie and walked his pony on in silence for several minutes; breaking occasionally into a market-trot, to keep up with the striding mare. Lost in the contemplation of the leading remembrance of his early life, he had, for the last half-hour, allowed me to commit every sort of equestrian misdemeanour; until, at last, something dreadful he caught me doing, with my toes and knees, awakened him to a sense of duty; and, after mildly rebuking me, proposed a canter. "Shorten your left curb bridle, and give her a touch with your left heel," he said, "There! she springs off into a canter like a rocking-horse; doesn't she?"

We had, by this time, turned our faces homeward; having skirted the Moor, and reached Crookston-Withers, after a good ten-mile circuit. I asked my excellent reminiscence to show me the cottage at which his master used to keep him waiting so long after his visits to Stonard Abbey.

"You're right!" he remarked, looking up at me sily from under his hat. "The young lady under the tree, with my master, *was* Miss Levine. That's Corner Cottage!"

He pointed to an ivy-grown cottage at the junction of three roads; the main road from Matlock and Nottingham coming straight up to it, and then branching off under its triangular garden; the right branch leading past Stonard Abbey over the Moor. A pretty hatch covered with a penthouse led, through the churchyard, to the church; which was only separated from the cottage by the left-hand road.

"But you have not told me how the younger Mr. Calder's wedding went off," I remarked, as we were about to ascend the Crookston side of Linney Hill.

Mr. Hockle's answer was: "You'll never get your legs right, unless you keep her bit level in her mouth, sink your heels, and keep the stirrup-irons under the joints of your feet."

"But about the wedding?"

"Well, it was the grandest thing ever seen in this county: eighty horsemen and horsewomen, besides carriages. The ball and fireworks at night were wonderful. As for the sup— Well sat, sir!"

It was a miracle that I had not tumbled off; for old Rufa, without the faintest warning, shied right across the road, a man on horse-back having suddenly leaped, through a gap in the hedge, close before her nose. The unexpected horseman trotted up the hill a few paces; then turned, and slowly came back. His nag was lean and meagre; but well-grown and strong-limbed. The rider sat bolt upright. His hat,

intensely brushed, and narrow-brimmed; his trousers pulled tightly down with a thin strap; his straight, brown surtout, buttoned to the throat; his neat collar-band turned over evenly all round the cravat, gave to his figure a slim and youthful appearance. But, as he approached, I perceived, by the strong furrows in his face, that he was much above the middle age. In passing Hockle, the hard, brown face was puckered up to express a smile; but the eye remained cold and glassy.

"What is your friend?" I asked, when he had ridden out of hearing. "A Jesuit or a horse-dealer?"

I dare not repeat the expletive with which my instructor prefaced his information. "What is he? Why what he has no more right to be than the man who was hanged for murder last week. He is, or pretends to be, the Squire of Crookston." Hockle's face, which generally wore a smiling, respectful expression, was now contracted. He switched his whip over his pony's mane, savagely, as if he were cutting down imaginary enemies with a broadsword. Pulling his hat over his brow, he said, "Let us push on. I daren't think of the villain!"

We trotted into Mr. Hockle's yard in silence; for, from that moment, no expostulation, no entreaty, could induce him to utter one syllable in continuation of the story. At last he said, musingly:

"No, no. I've told you quite enough of other people's secrets; for," he continued, as we dismounted, looking me almost sternly in the face, "We're a'most strangers, as yet."

"Not to remain strangers long, I hope, Mr. Hockle. I trust you will give me another call." Having said this, I stalked stiffly and painfully to my lodging.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

GENTLEMEN, even in good health, who are as little used to the saddle as I am, will readily understand why I was unable to take exercise of any sort next day. About noon, the tedium of my imprisonment was relieved by Mr. Hockle; who came to give the homœopathic advice of curing my complaint with its cause, by taking another ride with him. I declined very decidedly.

"The fact is, sir," he said abruptly, and without any sort of context, as he stepped up close to the sofa I was lying upon, "when things were as bad with him as they could be—"

"With whom?"

"With my master, Mr. George Dornley," he answered.

"Oh, then you *will* do me the great favour of finishing the story!" I interrupted.

"Yes, I will," he rejoined frankly. "There are some people we draw to at first sight,

and there are some people we want to run away from at first sight. Well, you put me a good deal in mind of Mr. George, and I feel somehow a sort of call for to let you know all about him."

"Pray sit down," I said.

The accomplished rider did sit down (how I envied him!). He sat on the edge of the chair, with his legs wide apart and his hand placed on a bundle of papers tied up in a pocket-handkerchief, to secure it upon his knee. "When things were as bad with him as they could be," he added, "he gave me these papers. They will tell you the rest of the story better than I can."

Mr. Hockle having left me in solemn charge of the bundle, took his leave.

I never robbed a house or poached over a manor; but I think my conscience, when I opened the first letter in the bundle, acquainted me with some of the sensations of a depredator. However, curiosity and Mr. Hockle's leave and licence prevailed; and I boldly plunged into the inmost recesses of private affairs which I had no earthly right to know.

I was naturally first attracted to a packet of letters in a lady's hand. They were all deeply bordered with black; all addressed to George Dornley, Esq.; and all, except two, were covered with foreign post-marks. They were love-letters; and I deferred exploring a daily newspaper, published in November, eighteen hundred and seventeen, and the other epistles—some in the cramped hand of a lawyer—to devour the lady's letters first. Having arranged them according to date, I found the first was written about a month after the interview described by Mr. Hockle in the dingle. It seems to have found young Mr. Dornley at Florence, and announced the unexpected demise of the writer's mother in terms of passionate grief. There was a long interval between that and the others; which were all directed to various places on the road from Florence to England, down to the last letter, which had been sent to the Royal George, Nottingham, "to be left till called for." The second letter ran thus:—

The shock of bereavement is passing away; for I feel it a duty to you, my dearest, to master my grief. I shut out the past. I look to the future. Only one little month, and then what a change!—more happiness than I shall be able to bear! My whole life seems to flow in small slow drops into the current of time which glides towards the ninth of June. Yes, you must not scold me, as you did in your last dear letter, for being too excitable; nor hint that I do not try all my might to command myself; for I have been as calm and as *same* one day with another as Miss Pim our Quaker postmistress is. But I must describe my remedy. Dr. Bole said last week, that my mind was fixed too constantly upon some one idea. He recommended immediate travel and change.

Dearest, I travel with you here, at home. I trace your journey in poor papa's journal of *his* journey from Florence, which he kept while he was travelling tutor to your, as well as his, staunch friend Lord Wordley. I put

myself day by day into the carriage, and am rolled hour by hour from one place to another with you; and see vineyards, and palaces, and peasants, and priests, and wayside chapels, and mountains, and lakes, and valleys, and villages with you, and change horses with you, and dine with you; and start afresh with you. It is now Tuesday afternoon, a quarter past four, and I am entering Nice with you. I know I am; because I alighted at Genoa with you, yesterday fortnight, at the same hour that your letter, which came to-day, tells me you stopped at that place. I shall go on travelling with you, dear George, day and night until I hear you hastening down Linney Hill upon Black Nan on the blessed ninth of June.

After the lapse of three days, the next letter began:—

Mrs. Calder is now permanently established at Crookston Hall, and I am extremely uneasy at the frequency of her visits to me. They look like persecution. They talk of sending your father to Bath—for change, they say; but Dr. Bole hints to me that it is to get him out of the way before your arrival. Whenever he is able to speak he asks for you; and I know when you return he would receive you with open arms, if they would only let him. Symptoms of immediate danger from the stroke have subsided; but he is still helpless. Our secret appears to be safe; but I dread Mrs. Calder's searching eyes and calculating visits. Where are we now? Still at Nice?

Here is our faithful ally, Tom, with the pony-chaise, so I must conclude, dearest. Take my whole heart.
Your own EUSTA.

The date of the next letter was a week later.

Mrs. Calder is always saying that before poor Mr. Dornley was struck with paralysis, he was continually bewailing that all the influence and consequence of the Crookston patrimony should, at his death, descend to a Radical, who would use them, as they wickedly say for base purposes. Dr. Bole tells me another story. The dear old man, he says, sometimes squeezes the doctor's hand, and tries to say "George!" as if he longed to see you. If you could only see him, I am sure he would be entirely reconciled to our marriage.

I begin to dread that Mrs. Calder suspects something; because when she speaks of my being dull and wretched—as I am sometimes—she says very cruelly that it is lucky poor Mamma passed away when she did; and, while pretending that no amount of contumely she heaps upon you can matter to me, feels all the while that she is putting me upon the rack. One day she said that your father's greatest consolation, before his illness, had been that you were not married; for if he saw a prospect of the property going in succession to any child of yours, it would kill him. I thank Heaven that I had strength to bear this, and that I did not betray myself while she remained; but, when she was gone, I had a severe hysterical attack, and Dr. Bole was obliged to be sent for. He always looks grave when he speaks of Mr. and Mrs. Calder; and once hinted, that he thought they would stop short of nothing to set you and yours aside. Mrs. Calder's pride is inflexible, and she seems to feel, as the wife of a second son, like a person labouring under some indelible disgrace. Oh, if she could only know how, in my utter loneliness, I yearn for some sisterly affection; how I could take even her to my heart;

how I should bless God, while you are away, if I had one kind and sympathising friend!

Still, dearest, I go on counting the hours and minutes that narrow the gulf which separates us from the ninth of June. You and I have been jogging on gaily together since my last, and we are now starting from Dijon. I see your dear eager eyes straining out of the carriage window, and hear your big round voice urging the postilion forward. Only three weeks! Oh, that it were only a week, a day, an hour, a minute!

A few days later:

They have just heard that your visit to Lord Wordley in Florence has made your election for Shutbury certain, dearest; and nothing can exceed their disappointment. They *will* speak of you, however much I try to turn off the conversation. Yesterday I said to Mr. Calder, (who now comes oftener than ever. Sometimes they both come together,) that the newspapers appeared to say that the county was getting quiet. 'It will never be quiet,' he exclaimed, 'while such treason-hatchers as George Dornley are allowed to be at large!' and a great deal more in that strain; also, that it was the ruin of the country for such people as you to be allowed to succeed to powerful inheritances. He does not speak passionately; but in a dry way; between his teeth, as if he were grinding his words; his hand tightly clenched on his knee. Mrs. Calder was more spiteful than ever. She spoke of the sin of clandestine marriages, and said they ought to be made illegal,—that her children would be beggars, compared with your children; and she looked at me from head to foot with a malicious look that made me tremble. I felt almost convinced that she knew all, and said it to wound me; yet I always sit in the great chair with my back to the light, and never leave off my pillow-lace-making; but she has such piercing eyes that she can, I am sure, see in the dark. Both of them harp upon your father's illness; not pitying him, but regretting that it is impossible, in his wretched condition, to get the entail of the Crookston estates cut off.

In spite of all, my dearest, I go on travelling with you as I sit at work (I have made lace enough for six sweet little caps; and *such* a long robe!). I hear the horses' bells, and the postilion's whip, and feel a jolt now and then, and somebody gets very angry with postmasters, and uses dreadfully strong expressions. We are now starting from Paris, are we not, darling?

The next letter was dated a week later:

Dear old Mr. Dornley was taken to Bath yesterday, and I feel, though I never have seen him since you left, more lonely than ever. Now that the truth will not worry you, my dear husband, I can tell you that I have not related a tenth part of the persecution I have endured from your brother and his wife; although I always wish to think of them with affection and even with love, as your relations. Indeed Dr. Bole has been afraid of something happening before its time in consequence of it: but he does not know what a strong-minded little woman I am.

This will reach you at Dover; and we are jogging on merrily to London. Your letter to me appears to have been delayed by the post-office. I am delighted with the arrangements of your London friend, and lost no time in obeying your instructions. I learn that the cottage he has chosen for us at Hampstead is quite in the country, yet not a very long drive from the House of Commons, where so much

of your time will be passed. But, darling, you must not be angry if I disobey you in not leaving our dear home for the new one, until after your return. Had your letter arrived when it ought, I might perhaps have been glad to get away from (must I call them?) my enemies; but now, as a week has gone by; and as, from the moment we separated, every faculty I have has been strained to picturing our next meeting *here*—in the beloved home which is associated with every particle of the happiness I owe you, I would rather bear my troubles for a few days longer than go to London to meet you there. Besides Dr. Bole says it may not be safe for me to travel just now. You must, you say, visit Shutbury the moment you land. Now that town being in the way to Crookston, if your plan were adopted there would be a day's delay, and your birth-day—the longed-for ninth—would pass away and be no more to me than any other day.

No one except your brother and his wife call upon me. I have had what dear papa used to call parochial visits from the rector; but Mrs. Drawley and her daughters never come, and scarcely speak when we meet them in the road. Even good Miss Pim, the Quakeress of the post-office, whose gossip I used to enjoy so much, has been of late very sparing of her conversation when I go to her shop, and has twice hinted that injurious reports are afloat respecting me, and which have, I shudder when I reflect, strong appearances to favour them. But, darling, next Monday week is the bright golden ninth; and you will come; and all the world will know that I—O I am getting crazy with joy!

The last letter was that sent to meet the recipient at the Nottingham inn.

Darling, I send this, as you requested, to the Royal George. Pray, give my best remembrances to the good landlady, who was so kind to me when we stopped there on the day of our stolen journey; and to my beautiful little handmaid, her daughter. How well they have kept our secret!

We are starting by the night coach from London, and are outside, I fear. Pray let us wrap up warm; for these June nights are treacherous. I never knew such a cold summer.

Black Nan was sent away yesterday by Farmer Thorn, who, having business at Shutbury, was glad to ride her there. I know you will be pleased with her condition. Be sure and praise her condition to Thomas when you meet him at Alfreton; for he is excessively proud of it; and has been altogether an excellent and discreet lad from the moment you left. I will not fail to send him to meet you with the old grey, at Alfreton, that you may have a fresh horse to gallop you home. I hope you will gallop all the way—home—to me! The ecstasy of that thought is too great. . . .

O, my adored husband! as Monday approaches my happiness is scarcely endurable! If my old cloudy fits did not now and then damp it, I believe it would drive me crazy. Sometimes I fancy something *might* happen to prevent or delay our meeting; sometimes I believe that nothing *could* prevent it, and that there is no cruelty so terrible upon earth, much less in heaven, to destroy the world of happiness that awaits me. A thousand blessings, my beloved!

P.S. I open my letter to say that Dr. Bole has been suddenly sent for to go to Bath to put the Bath doctors in the right way of treating your father."

The rest of the story—learnt from Hockley's packet, from himself, and from

persons whose acquaintance I afterwards made—I must tell in my own way in future chapters.

A LEAF FROM THE OLDEST OF BOOKS.

THE insular Englishman is prone to spend his holidays abroad; and the highways of Europe, about the time of the long vacation, swarm with pleasure-hunting and sight-seeing emigrants from the white cliffs of Albion. Her shores, nevertheless, include many localities that would well repay the intelligent tourist; and he may not be uninterested to know the peculiar attractions of some places nearer home than the Alps, Scandinavia, or the Bosphorus.

Were a magician, for example, to turn a spice-island, with its plants and animals, into stone, and to transport it bodily from the Indian Archipelago to the mouth of the Thames, he would realise such a phenomenon as the Isle of Sheppey now presents to the eyes of the geological visitor. There can scarcely be a less promising locality, at first sight, for any subject of amusement, interest, or instruction; but I will endeavour to show what resources Sheppey presents to an excursionist who may have been bitten by Buckland or Lyell with their favourite science.

In the depth of last year's hard winter, February, eighteen hundred and fifty-five, I visited, in company with two brother collectors, that favourite locality for the discovery and acquisition of fossil organic remains. The dark cliffs of London clay looked all the blacker by contrast with the thick coat of snow that then covered them, and with the white wreaths or tatters of the same winter garment that clung to the crevices and irregularities in the face of the cliffs. The sea stretched away, of a leaden-grey greenish hue, under a bitter cold, stormy sky; and yet, as we walked along the beach, which the tide had deserted, almost every pebble that we kicked along proved to be some water-worn organic fossil washed out of the cliffs,—for the most part, the recognisable remains of some tropical plant or animal. In many of them we could discern traces of palm-fruits, petrified, most like those of the low shrubby palms of the genus *Nipa*, several species of which now abound in the Molucca and Philippine Islands, where they grow in marshy tracts, at the mouths of great rivers, and where the waters are brackish; fragments of the carapace of sea-tortoises or turtles; vertebræ of crocodiles; teeth of huge sharks; pieces of the back-bone of large boa-constrictors; all turned into dark-coloured stone. The contrast was most singular and striking.

We left London Bridge by one of the Southend and Sheerness steamers, at eleven

o'clock one Tuesday morning (these vessels sail on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, at that hour), and reached Sheerness between four and five o'clock in the afternoon. On landing at this busy place of war, we walked rapidly through the part included within the limits of the garrison, and called the Blue Town, beyond the fortifications to the north-east, to the part of Sheerness called the Mile Town, where we took up our quarters at the comfortable inn called the Wellington. Here we ordered dinner, beds, and Paddy Hays. Let no one who visits Sheppey for the sake of its fossils, lose a moment after his arrival at the Royal Hotel, or the Wellington, in requesting the attendance of the industrious collector and humorous vendor of the natural curiosities of the neighbourhood, who is best known to the servants of these inns by the name above-cited. Mr. Hays will submit to you, with, perhaps, one or two exceptional rarissima reserved for old scientific customers, all the best fossils which he has been able to collect since his boxes were emptied at the last visit of the curious. He will expatiate upon them in a language combining a fragmentary assortment of learned technicalities with the richest of brogues; but he will not ask much more than the market value of the fossils, and a very little bargaining will leave a characteristic assortment of fossil fruits, fishes' heads and trunks, teeth of sharks, teeth and bones of crocodiles and turtles, outlandish petrified crab-like and lobster-like crustacea, the nautilus and other eocene shells, in the possession of the dilettante visitor, at a very moderate cost.

Our negotiation with Mr. Hays being satisfactorily concluded, and our meal ended—a sort of improvised dinner-tea—we indulged in a review of our newly-acquired treasures, alternating the whiff of the cigar and the sip of the tumbler of punch with inspections and comparisons of our respective specimens, and interblending the joke and laugh with recondite speculations on the nature of the extinct creatures, and the kind of world they lived in.

The beds at the Wellington are clean and comfortable; our slumbers were sound and refreshing. We rose in the morning to an early breakfast, having a considerable extent of ground to traverse during the day's brief daylight at this season. Before starting, we were careful to stow into our haversacks sheets of soft paper to wrap round the fragile specimens; a few calico-bags of from three to five inches diameter, to separate the small from the large fossils; a chisel, and our lightest geological hammer.

One of the party was chiefly bent upon viewing the great section of the eocene London clay, which is afforded by the cliffs on the north shore of Sheppey. The principal object of my other companion and myself was to collect as many fossils as we could.

We therefore parted company, agreeing to rendezvous at the Wellington for a late dinner. My experience enabled me to warn my geological friend to limit his under-cliff coast rambles to the period of the receding of the tide; for a too abstracted observer might get into an awkward predicament, if he were caught by the returning tide, and shut in between the promontories of clay and mud which extend into the sea at many parts of this coast.

A geologist is apt to forget both tide and time, and to become so absorbed in the contemplation of the overlying strata when exposed on a rare section, as to lose thought of all mundane considerations whatever.

Hugh Strickland, the estimable fellow-labourer with Murchison in divers good geological works, crept down the steep bank of a railway cutting, near the entry of a tunnel, on the Great Northern. The gorge had been too recently scooped out to have its structure obliterated by the healing growth of vegetation; but the rails were laid, and the road was in operation. He stood on the narrow path between the up and down lines, sketch-book in hand, conning the steep section with raised head, and jotting down memoranda as suggested by the leaves, more or less exposed, of the old world's book. He saw a train advancing towards the tunnel, and, as it neared with the warning whistle, he stepped back upon the opposite line; at that moment another train emerged from the tunnel, and hurled him into eternity. Poor Strickland! He was well known to all our little party, and deeply respected by us. We were discussing the circumstances of his sad fate as we started on our excursion.

At first we held on a common course, leaving Sheerness by the new town, and passing along the sea-wall towards the Minster until we reached Scaps-gate, where the cliffs begin to rise from the low-lands of the western end of Sheppey. Some collectors of the cement-stone or pyrites, which they call coppers, dwell in cottages scattered round this point. We called at each to inquire for curiosities, and procured some really good specimens at a moderate price. To my share fell a few excellent fossil fruits of the Nipa-like palms, a fine nautilus, with its mother-of-pearl as lustrous as when the animal guided its gorgeous shell over the glancing waves beneath the hot rays of the eocene sun. I got also a very good skull of the large extinct samberoid (bonito-like) fish, which M. Agassiz has called *Cymbrium macroponum*, so termed from the great expanse of the opercula, or gill-covers. The bony cup, or outer coat of both eyes was well preserved; those eyes are relatively larger, as in all the existing swift-swimming samberoids. The eye-ball in fishes is not round; it is flattened in front, so as to form no obstacle to swimming by projecting from the level of the side of the head; and the osseous

texture of the sclerotic relates to the necessity for greater strength in that tunic in an eye which is not spherical in shape, and which is subject to great external pressure when the fish seeks the depths of the sea. It was most interesting to contemplate, in the petrified remains of a fish which swam that old European ocean from which the Alps had but just began to rise, the same evidence of prospective contrivance, or the same exemplification of the conditions relating to the laws of the refraction of light and the density of the aqueous medium, as may be studied by the comparative anatomist in the fishes of the present day.

Having made our purchases at Scaps-gate, we left the geologist to scramble along the shingle at the base of the cliffs, whilst we diverged towards Minster Church, passing which, we proceeded on the road towards Warden. About three-quarters of a mile beyond the church there is a lane on the left hand leading towards the Royal Oak. In this lane, and scattered between it and Hensbrook, are some cottages of cement-gatherers and others who work upon the beach. Knock at the door of every hovel: there is no knowing what treasure the good man may not have brought home and left with the wife, on the chance of a call from a peripatetic collector of curiosities. On the present occasion, at the dwelling of a family named Crockford, I had the good fortune to meet with a large chelonite, somewhat cumbrous, it is true, but which, having slung it, with a little contrivance and help from the good dame, over my shoulders, I bore along bravely and safely through the day's ramble, and, ultimately, to mine inn. It is now the prime ornament of my tertiary cabinet, and is allowed to be the finest example of an eocene terrapene, or fresh-water tortoise, that has yet been got. The true turtles are much more common at Sheppey. My fossil terrapene equals the largest known living species, and exceeds by more than four times the solitary species of *Emys* that still lingers on the European continent. It will be the subject of two beautiful plates in the forthcoming number of Owen's *History of British Fossil Reptiles*, and has gladdened the eyes of the Professor by a more exact demonstration of all the complex sutures of carapace and plastron, and by more perfect impressions of all the tortoise-shell plates that of old covered the now petrified bony box of the slow-treading reptile than the anatomist had previously witnessed in any fossil tortoise or turtle.

From the Crockfords and other dwellers of the cottages in and near the lane, we next trudged on to Hensbrook. Here we made inquiry for a man named Pead, whom I had previously known as an industrious collector, and we found amongst his stores, besides many fair ordinary specimens of the Sheppey fossils, two good portions of the vertebral

column of the old boa-constrictor of the eocene period. One of these included thirteen vertebrae, retaining their natural manifold and complex articulations, and must have belonged to a serpent more than fifteen feet in length. There is not, perhaps, any of the animal remains in this locality which testifies more strongly to the former warmth of the climate of the latitude of Kent than the old Sheppey constricting snake called *Palæophis toliapicus*. From Hensbrook we went our way along the summit of the cliff towards Warden, calling at every cottage we passed, and gathering as we went until we arrived at Warden Point. At this part there are some dwellings of labourers that work upon the beach—said abodes being located with enough of regularity, and in a soil which justifies the tempting title of Mud Row, by which the nucleus of a hamlet is known, and by which name the cottages should be inquired for by the inexperienced explorer of Sheppey. Beyond this point he will ask and search in vain for any fossils; but here the collectors commonly offer a rich harvest of remains for his selection.

We were rewarded by finding among the hundreds of parts of fossil fishes and crustaceans a small but characteristic part of the skeleton of the extinct vulture of Sheppey (*Lithornis vulturinus*), and a portion of jaw, with teeth, and two vertebrae of that remarkable quadruped, somewhat between the modern hog and hippopotamus, which Owen has called the *Hyrcotherium*.

Heavily laden with primeval treasures, we now began our return, and, avoiding the ups and downs of the undulating cliffs, we made the best of our way by the road that runs through the most level part of the country to Sheerness.

Here we were welcomed by our companion, who had finished a little sooner his geological observations, and were assured by him that the fat goose which we had picked up at Leadenhall Market, en route to the Sheerness packet, was done to a turn, and only waited our arrival to be served up. To the wise this hint will suffice; with all its merits, the Wellington, at the dead season, may be able to afford but homely fare to the unexpected tourist, and the worthy landlady will most gladly apply her best culinary skill on any good "proverd" that a disciple of Major Dalgetty may have had the forethought to bring with him.

UNHAPPINESS IN THE ELYSIAN FIELDS.

EVERY Sunday afternoon during the spring of eighteen hundred and fifty-six, Parisians taking their habitual walk in the Champs Elysées, might have observed the huge green gate of a mansion situated on the right hand side, more than half-way up from the Place de la Concorde towards the Barrière de

l'Etoile. It bore the number seventy-eight. For years previously, observers had been struck with the sombre appearance of this mansion. Its huge green gate was never opened, although flanked by two porters' lodges; the shutters of which were always closed. An eccentric notice was painted in black letters beside the gate: "Persons who wish to leave cards and letters are requested to put them into the box and ring loudly, as the porter is far from here." Through the iron railing and across the adjoining garden, the mansion itself was seen: a large building with many windows all shut, looking like a prison. It was the hôtel of the late Countess de Caumont-Laforce, a lady bearing an historical title among the nobility of France.

The dukes of Caumont-Laforce were formerly distinguished among the Protestant nobility of France; and incidents connected with them will be remembered as long as the Bartholemew massacre and the Dragonnades of Louis the Fourteenth. Voltaire, in his *Henriade*, mentions the wonderful escape of one of the De Caumonts, in the massacre.

The dukes of Caumont-Laforce were reunited to the Roman Catholic church, a century afterwards, by Louis the Fourteenth. Madame Scarron—the widow of a loose poet—was employed by the Jesuits to frighten the remorseful soul of this ruthless king into great professions of piety, into the revocation of the edict of Nantes, and into measures for effecting the forcible re-union of Protestants with the Roman Catholic church. The king deigned to talk to the Duke de Caumont-Laforce about his conversion. When talking would not do, he confined him to one of his estates, and deprived him of his children, by confiding their education to one of their Roman Catholic relatives. After some months of resistance the duke feigned submission; but, a will having been found by the royal spies which proved that his profession was insincere, the duke and duchess were confined for two years in the Bastille. The duke issued from it to make an abjuration of his faith, while the firmer duchess came out of prison a stauncher Protestant than ever. During the remaining years of the life of the duke, the king planted upon them a police spy and a Jesuit priest, who lived continually in their apartments, and had authority to enter their nuptial chamber by day and by night, to prevent the Protestant wife from speaking a single word about religion to her perverted husband. Fifteen days prior to the death of the duke she was separated from him entirely, lest she might prompt him to express his real sentiments in his last moments. His noble widow died in want and exile in England. The young Duke de Caumont-Laforce, educated by his Roman Catholic relatives, was reconciled to the Church, and figures among the persons described by Molière: "These fellows, I say, whom we see,

with uncommon ardour, by the road to heaven, hunting their fortunes."

But, I have not the least intention of tracing the history of the family of Caumont-Laforce, wishing only to say why the Parisians were interested about the green gate, and to record a story which is illustrative of the condition of the French, and instructive respecting the phenomena of crime. The present Count de Caumont-Laforce is a gallant soldier who distinguished himself at the siege of Antwerp, and in the streets of Paris, in June, eighteen hundred and forty-eight. Though his father, the duke, is a Bourbonist, he lends his name to the dynasty of the Bonapartes, and receives annually thirty thousand francs as a member of the senate. The countess was the niece of the wife of Marshal Gerard, and was related, through Madame de Genlis, to the Orleans family. She used to speak of Louis Philippe as "My cousin the king," and of Clementine, the queen of the Belgians, as "my sister."

Ever since the downfall of Louis Philippe, the eternal war between the bad rich and the bad poor of France has been carried on, by niggardliness on the one side, and by bad blood upon the other. The Orleanists and Bourbonists have fought the Republic and the Empire, by making the poor poorer, by spending as little as possible in the form of wages, and by extorting as much as possible in the form of revenue. This policy became an absolute insanity of avarice in the Countess de Caumont-Laforce.

The marriage of the Count and Countess was a union of riches and titles, and was extremely unhappy. She was a woman of a middling height, with flashing dark eyes, who, under a noble air, with a mien of insolence tempered by refinement, and a deportment and conversation displaying an intelligent mind—had a soul ineffably sordid. When her husband dined out, her two children and their English governess would have had no dinner, if he had not given them money to buy something at the shops. Her son, when a little boy, would scream in the streets when his mother took his frane from him. No servant could live with her. Ten or a dozen years ago, her husband was obliged to separate from her, with his children. He tried three times to deprive her of the management of her affairs, as a lunatic; but her powerful relatives—whose pride would not admit the existence of insanity among them, and her own plausible tongue—persuaded the tribunals she was the injured wife of a covetous husband. Deprived of the restraining influence of her husband, she lived alone in her mansion, amidst unimaginable dust and disorder; splendour and squalor. She slept in a bed which was never made, and bought her food for a few coppers in the shops. Her chimney-piece clocks were never wound up, and were placed upon the floors; her porce-

lain ware was piled upon the beds; and her pictures were turned against the walls. She did not spend, it has been calculated by one who knew her well, twenty pounds a-year upon herself. Her chief expense was the keep of three horses, rarely used. Whatever little cooking she did, she did in her boudoir; and all the harness of her horses was kept in her drawing-room. No sober groom who knew her reputation would have taken her place, as she scolded, and cheated, and changed her grooms continually. When she did ride out, the Countess and her groom were a show which delighted the eyes of the boys of the neighbourhood, with a living companion picture to Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, each one feeling—

And when again she rides abroad
May I be there to see.

Encountering her husband upon one of these occasions, she followed him, loaded him with abuse, and threatened him with her whip, the whole length of the Champs Elysées.

The Countess had a family mansion in Belgium, which was kept like her Paris hôtel. When she travelled from Paris to Brussels, she went by the third-class carriages through France, and by the first through Belgium; changing her carriage, because when she went on a visit to the queen, a court carriage was waiting for her. Once, when the court was at their country residence at Laeken, an incident occurred which shall be described in her own words. "You see, I went down to see my sister, Clementine, when they were at Laeken, because I had something to say to her. I took with me my little wicker market-basket, in which I kept my keys; for there are thieves, you know, in Belgium, as well as in France. Well, on descending at the palace, I left my cloak in the vestibule, because, you see, it was all patched; and I left my little basket hidden behind a curtain, in one of the ante-rooms. Just as I had done speaking with the queen, who should come in but the king, who insisted upon giving me his arm to my carriage. The honour was no doubt very great, but it was very disagreeable, as I had hidden my little market-basket behind a curtain, and left my old patched cloak in the vestibule. Luckily, although the king knows French very well, he does not understand Flemish. So I told a little page, in Flemish, to go and fetch my little market-basket from behind the curtain; and he went and brought it. The day was very cold; so when we came into the vestibule, the king asked for my cloak, and the lackeys, all laughing at its patches, gave it to the king, who put it upon my shoulders. Really the honour was very great, you know, but it was very disagreeable, you see, on account of my little basket and my old patched cloak."

The Countess de Caumont-Laforce ought to have been surrounded with friends who would have told her she was, according to the

probable course of things, courting a violent end. An assassination is as invariable a consequence of certain combinations of provocation and vengeance, as a conflagration is of certain combinations of caloric and combustibles. The moral perversions of the aristocratic avarice of the countess, we shall see, was a thing not a whit less revolting than the moral perversion of the democratic fury of her groom.

The Countess gave more than her share of occupation to the police. During one of her absences in Belgium, all the furniture of her hôtel was packed up and sent off to Havre, for shipment to America, and the police only arrived just in time to prevent the vessel from sailing. Her avarice, violence, and dishonesty produced continual quarrels with her ever-changing grooms. Sometimes she pushed them, and sometimes they pushed her. She once felled a lad to the ground with her fist, and hurt him so badly that he had to be carried to the hospital.

Nothing is known of the family of Antoine Baumann, her murderer. The process by which servants are brought who kill their employers is, however, it may be observed, a thing of considerable importance to society, and well worth knowing. Baumann was a native of Wurtemberg, knowing how to read and write; and came to France to learn the language. He could never obtain a place in Paris as groom in which he could gain more than twenty pence a-day. He lost one place for having been drunk. He remained five years in the service of an artist painter, who always found him mild, obliging, and faithful. All money-errands were executed by him with probity and exactitude. He assisted his countrymen in distress with generosity. His only faults were, his sometimes getting tipsy, and his taking no thought whatever of the morrow. His intelligence was very limited, and the effect of drink upon him was rather to brutify than to irritate him. He entered the service of the Countess in the end of January, eighteen hundred and fifty-six.

On the morning of the twentieth of February, between eight and nine o'clock, he came out of the huge green gate. His mistress had sent him to buy some rolls and milk. Baumann, after making his purchases for his mistress, entered a wine-shop, and bought and drank twopence-worth of brandy, obtaining as much as could be obtained in Great Britain for a shilling. The wine-shops are the colleges and chapels of the poor in France. History, morals, politics, jurisprudence, and literature, in iniquitous forms, are all taught in these colleges and chapels, where professors of evil continually deliver their lessons, and where hymns are sung nightly to the demon of demoralisation. In these haunts of the poor, theft is taught as the morality of

property, falsehood as the morality of speech, and assassination as the justice of the people. It is in the wine-shop the cabman is taught to think it heroic to shoot the middle-class-man who disputes his fare. It is in the wine-shop the workman is taught to admire the man who stabs his faithless mistress. It is in the wine-shop the doom is pronounced of the employer who lowers the pay of the employed. The secret tribunals of the nation of poverty and of crime, hold there their sittings, and pronounce there their sentences. These are the camps of one of the armies, whose wars, whether dumb or thundering, form the internal life of France. The wine-shops breed—in a physical atmosphere of malaria and a moral pestilence of envy and vengeance—the men of crime and revolution. Hunger is proverbially a bad counsellor, but drink is a worse; and Baumann returned from the wine-shop with his brain full of an intention to give his mistress a beating as a lesson. His dram, we shall find in the end, cost him more than twopence.

When Baumann returned, heated with brandy, the Countess scolded him thrice for not having sufficiently looked for a bit of old iron. He said he had looked enough for it, and she said he had not; and he said he had until he struck her with his fists, and strangled her with his hands, scarcely knowing what he did all the while. He dragged her senseless body into the woodhouse, and piled straw and wood upon it. A negro servant in the next house, having heard the cries, called out to him, "were they strangling you, down there?" and Baumann answered, "No, it is nothing." Recovering a little from his delirium of brandy and fury, Baumann picked up the keys the Countess had let fall, and, entering the house, took a purse and forty-five francs to enable him to escape to his country. After having washed his hands, he went to go out by the gate.

Meanwhile, the negro, convinced there was something wrong, had spoken to a policeman, who continued to linger about the gate. When Baumann came out, the policeman asked him where he was going; and he answered, to get a dram.

"But you have blood upon you!"

"I have just killed my mistress."

When the Commissary of the Police came, Baumann told him all about it.

On Tuesday, the fifteenth of April, Antoine Baumann was tried for murder, and condemned to imprisonment with hard labour, for life—the price of his dram, and the result of his training in the schools in which he was bred. The sordid Countess and the drunken groom reaped both the consequences of their qualities; and the world is but too full of seed ripening into similar fruit.

"Familiar in their Mouths as HOUSEHOLD WORDS."—SHAKESPEARE.

HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

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THE DEMEANOUR OF MURDERERS.

THE recent trial of the greatest villain that ever stood in the Old Bailey dock, has produced the usual descriptions inseparable from such occasions. The public has read from day to day of the murderer's complete self-possession, of his constant coolness, of his profound composure, of his perfect equanimity. Some describers have gone so far as to represent him, occasionally rather amused than otherwise by the proceedings; and all the accounts that we have seen, concur in more or less suggesting that there is something admirable, and difficult to reconcile with guilt, in the bearing so elaborately set forth.

As whatever tends, however undesignedly, to insinuate this uneasy sense of incongruity into any mind, and to invest so abhorrent a ruffian with the slightest tinge of heroism, must be prejudicial to the general welfare, we revive the detestable subject with the hope of showing that there is nothing at all singular in such a deportment, but that it is always to be looked for and counted on, in the case of a very wicked murderer. The blacker the guilt, the stronger the probability of its being thus carried off.

In passing, we will express an opinion that Nature never writes a bad hand. Her writing, as it may be read in the human countenance, is invariably legible, if we come at all trained to the reading of it. Some little weighing and comparing are necessary. It is not enough in turning our eyes on the demon in the Dock, to say he has a fresh color, or a high head, or a bluff manner, or what not, and therefore he does not look like a murderer, and we are surprised and shaken. The physiognomy and conformation of the Poisoner whose trial occasions these remarks, were exactly in accordance with his deeds; and every guilty consciousness he had gone on storing up in his mind, had set its mark upon him.

We proceed, within as short a compass as possible, to illustrate the position we have placed before our readers in the first paragraph of this paper.

The Poisoner's demeanour was considered exceedingly remarkable, because of his composure under trial, and because of the confident expectation of acquittal which he

professed to the last, and under the influence of which he, at various times during his incarceration, referred to the plans he entertained for the future when he should be free again.

Can any one, reflecting on the matter for five minutes, suppose it possible—we do not say probable, but possible—that in the breast of this Poisoner there were surviving, in the days of his trial, any lingering traces of sensibility, or any wrecked fragment of the quality which we call sentiment? Can the profoundest or the simplest man alive, believe that in such a heart there could have been left, by that time, any touch of Pity? An objection to die, and a special objection to be killed, no doubt he had; and with that objection very strong within him for divers very weighty reasons, he was—not quite composed. Distinctly *not* quite composed, but, on the contrary, very restless. At one time, he was incessantly pulling on and pulling off his glove; at another time, his hand was constantly passing over and over his face; and the thing most instanced in proof of his composure, the perpetual writing and scattering about of little notes, which, as the verdict drew nearer and nearer, thickened from a sprinkling to a heavy shower, is in itself a proof of miserable restlessness. Beyond this emotion, which any lower animal would have, with an apprehension on it of a similar fate, what was to be expected from such a creature but insensibility? I poison my friend in his drink, and I poison my friend in his bed, and I poison my wife, and I poison her memory, and do you look to ME, at the end of such a career as mine, for sensibility? I have not the power of it even in my own behalf, I have lost the manner of it, I don't know what it means, I stand contemptuously wondering at you people here when I see you moved by this affair. In the Devil's name, man, have you heard the evidence of that chambermaid, whose tea I should like to have the sweetening of? Did you hear her describe the agonies in which my friend expired? Do you know that it was my trade to be learned in poisons, and that I foresaw all that, and considered all that, and knew, when I stood at his bedside looking down upon his face turned to me for help on its road to the grave through the frightful gate then swinging

on its hinges, that in so many hours or minutes all those horrors would infallibly ensue? Have you heard that, after my poisonings, I have had to face the circumstances out, with friends and enemies, doctors, undertakers, all sorts of men, and have uniformly done it; and do you wonder that I face it out with you? Why not? What right or reason can you have to expect anything else of me? Wonder! You might wonder, indeed, if you saw me moved, here now before you. If I had any natural human feeling for my face to express, do you imagine that those medicines of my prescribing and administering would ever have been taken from my hand? Why, man, my demeanour at this bar is the natural companion of my crimes, and, if it were a tittle different from what it is, you might even begin reasonably to doubt whether I had ever committed them!

The Poisoner had a confident expectation of acquittal. We doubt as little that he really had some considerable hope of it, as we do that he made a pretence of having more than he really had. Let us consider, first, if it be wonderful that he should have been rather sanguine. He had poisoned his victims according to his carefully-laid plans; he had got them buried out of his way; he had murdered, and forged, and yet kept his place as a good fellow and a sporting character; he had made a capital friend of the coroner, and a serviceable traitor of the postmaster; he was a great public character, with a special Act of Parliament for his trial; the choice spirits of the Stock Exchange were offering long odds in his favor, and, to wind up all, here was a tip-top Counsellor bursting into tears for him, saying to the jury, three times over, "You dare not, you dare not, you dare not!" and bolting clean out of the course to declare his belief that he was innocent. With all this to encourage him, with his own Derby-day division of mankind into knaves and fools, and with his own secret knowledge of the difficulties and mysteries with which the proof of Poison had been, in the manner of the Poisoning, surrounded, it would have been strange indeed if he were not borne up by some idea of escape. But, why should he have professed himself to have more hope of escape than he really entertained? The answer is, because it belongs to that extremity, that the villain in it should not only declare a strong expectation of acquittal himself, but should try to infect all the people about him with it. Besides having an artful fancy (not wholly without foundation) that he disseminates by that means an impression that he is innocent; to surround himself in his narrowed world with this fiction is, for the time being, to fill the jail with a faintly rose-coloured atmosphere, and to remove the gallows to a more agreeable distance. Hence, plans are laid for the future, communicated with an engaging candor to turnkeys, and

discussed in a reliant spirit. Even sick men and women, over whom natural death is impending, constantly talk with those about them on precisely the same principle.

It may be objected that there is some slight ingenuity in our endeavours to resolve the demeanour of this Poisoner into the same features as the demeanour of every other very wicked and very hardened criminal in the same strait, but that a parallel would be better than argument. We have no difficulty in finding a parallel; we have no difficulty in finding scores, beyond the almost insuperable difficulty of finding, in the criminal records, as deeply-dyed a murderer. To embarrass these remarks, however, with references to cases that have passed out of the general memory, or have never been widely known, would be to render the discussion very irksome. We will confine ourselves to a famous instance. We will not even ask if it be so long ago since RUSH was tried, that *his* demeanour is forgotten. We will call THURTELL into court, as one of the murderers best remembered in England.

With the difference that the circumstances of Thurtell's guilt are not comparable in atrocity with those of the Poisoner's, there are points of strong resemblance between the two men. Each was born in a fair station, and educated in conformity with it; each murdered a man with whom he had been on terms of intimate association, and for whom he professed a friendship at the time of the murder; both were members of that vermin-race of outer betters and blacklegs, of whom some worthy samples were presented on both trials, and of whom, as a community, mankind would be blessedly rid, if they could all be, once and for ever, knocked on the head at a blow. Thurtell's demeanour was exactly that of the Poisoner's. We have referred to the newspapers of his time, in aid of our previous knowledge of the case; and they present a complete confirmation of the simple fact for which we contend. From day to day, during his imprisonment before his trial, he is described as "collected and resolute in his demeanour," as "rather mild and conciliatory in his address," as being visited by "friends whom he receives with cheerfulness," as "remaining firm and unmoved," as "increasing in confidence as the day which is to decide his fate draws nigh," as "speaking of the favourable result of the trial with his usual confidence." On his trial, he looks "particularly well and healthy." His attention and composure are considered as wonderful as the Poisoner's; he writes notes as the Poisoner did; he watches the case with the same cool eye; he "retains that firmness for which, from the moment of his apprehension, he has been distinguished;" he "carefully assort[s] his papers on a desk near him;" he is (in this being singular) his own orator, and makes a speech in the manner of Edmund Kean, on the whole not very unlike that of

the leading counsel for the Poisoner, concluding, as to his own innocence, with a *So help me God!* Before his trial, the Poisoner says he will be at the coming race for the Derby. Before his trial, Thurtell says, "that after his acquittal he will visit his father, and will propose to him to advance the portion which he intended for him, upon which he will reside abroad." (So Mr. Manning observed, under similar circumstances, that when all that nonsense was over, and the thing wound up, he had an idea of establishing himself in the West Indies). When the Poisoner's trial is yet to last another day or so, he enjoys his half-pound of steak and his tea, wishes his best friends may sleep as he does, and fears the grave "no more than his bed." (See the Evening Hymn for a Young Child). When Thurtell's trial is yet to last another day or so, he takes his cold meat, tea, and coffee, and "enjoys himself with great comfort;" also, on the morning of his execution, he wakes from as innocent a slumber as the Poisoner's, declaring that he has had an excellent night, and that he hasn't dreamed "about this business." Whether the parallel will hold to the last, as to "feeling very well and very comfortable," as to "the firm step and perfect calmness," as to "the manliness and correctness of his general conduct," as to "the countenance unchanged by the awfulness of the situation"—not to say as to bowing to a friend, from the scaffold "in a friendly but dignified manner"—our readers will know for themselves when we know too.

It is surely time that people who are not in the habit of dissecting such appearances, but who are in the habit of reading about them, should be helped to the knowledge that, in the worst examples they are the most to be expected, and the least to be wondered at. That, there is no inconsistency in them, and no fortitude in them. That, there is nothing in them but cruelty and insensibility. That, they are seen, because the man is of a piece with his misdeeds; and that it is not likely that he ever could have committed the crimes for which he is to suffer, if he had not this demeanour to present, in standing publicly to answer for them.

CHIP.

THE SALT IN THE SEA.

In the first chapter of the article entitled *The Minerals That We Eat*, published in Number Three Hundred and Twenty-two of *Household Words*, it was stated* that the quantity of salt in the sea averages forty per cent.; a typographical error so glaring that it almost corrects itself. For "forty," however, read "four;" but the proportion necessarily varies very considerably in dif-

ferent parts of the globe: according to the best authorities, the mean average of salt to water in the sea, is not more than from two-and-a-half to three per cent.

THE NINTH OF JUNE.

IN TEN CHAPTERS. CHAPTER THE THIRD.

A THICK Scotch mist fell upon the town of Nottingham on that ninth of June (when the present century was far on in its teens) which fell upon a Monday. A stout, middle-aged man had arrived over night at the Royal George on a thorough-bred hunter; and, having received a letter directed to the name of Nobble in the morning, left a part of his breakfast and hastily went out; remaining away until the afternoon.

He was standing near the bar, when a younger traveller dismounted from a black mare, threw off his dripping white upper-coat, ordered it to be quickly dried, and, knocking at the little bar-window, asked if any letters had been left there for him. A lovely little bar-maid threw up the sash, and gleefully shook her clustering curls as she handed him two letters, and hoped he was quite well. (Hearts have been lost to that now more than matured beauty, within the last ten years, to my certain knowledge.) He did not answer the question with his usual affability; for the first letter which he opened vexed him. It bore no post-mark, and he asked who left it? The answer was—"Please, sir, the Green Boar's boots left it." While he was reading it, Mr. Nobble—standing on the mat pretending to pare his nails with a large pocket-knife—did not look up; but, covering his eyes with their lids, "took stock," (as he would have expressed himself,) of the visitor from under them. The new guest, having ordered dinner, entered a private parlour. Mr. Nobble adjourned to the coffee-room to dine. Looking back, a broad grin spread itself over his broad countenance; for the other gentleman raised the black-bordered letter that had come by post, to his lips before he had quite closed the parlour-door.

It was remarkable that exactly one hour afterwards, the same persons, having separately dined, appeared on the same mat at the same instant. Both had ordered their horses round at the same minute, and both were going the same road.

"Shall we jog on together?" asked Mr. Nobble.

"Thank you," answered the more reserved traveller, "I have business at Alfreton, and shall outstrip you."

"Curious! I have business at Alfreton. I want to catch the Chesterfield mail at Alfreton—the up-mail; and I've got a capital mount," returned the other. The person addressed did not answer; but went on reading the bills tacked against the passage wall, which were headed "Riot," "Rick Burning,"

* In the second column of page 441.

"Treason," "Seditious Meetings," and so on; and offering five hundred pounds reward for the apprehension of this person, and two hundred pounds for the capture of that.

"Jolly times, these!" Mr. Nobble said, quite boldly. The gentleman turned his head quickly round from his broadside studies, and confronted Mr. Nobble with a look of surprise; but was still silent. He knew well enough that, with habeas corpus suspended; with imprisonment, without cause assigned or regular commitment or even the pretence of trial, pretty frequent, and with a noisome cloud of spies permeating all the stormy and starving parts of the country, any freeborn Englishman who was not gifted with an independent five hundred a-year (as Sidney Smith observed) had to be very cautious what sort of politics he talked to a stranger. Perhaps Mr. Nobble had five hundred a year: his new blue coat and gilt buttons, his top-boots, his thoroughbred hunter, and his unstinted denunciations of the government when the two had mounted and were trotting out of the town together (there was no shaking him off) would have confirmed that idea, but for a certain familiarity and swagger which Mr. Nobble was unable, although he tried, to suppress.

His topic, dangerous enough, was evidently a congenial one to his companion; who, although the drizzle fell thickly, slackened rein to continue the conversation. But, by the time he had buttoned up his white top coat, and tucked in the tassels of his hessian boots, he had thought better of it; and, having got clear of the crowds of factory girls who were picking their muddy way home to tea, he broke forward into a canter with a curt "good afternoon," and was soon beyond the sound of the politician's voice, and of the clicking of pattens.

Mr. Nobble gave him his own way as far as Eastwood, over Cinder Hill and Moorgreen to Selstone; but there he overtook him. Even then, attempts at conversation failed; and he was too civil to persevere. Another Good Evening; another canter; and, at about three miles further on, the black mare was pulled up at a cross corner, and a young groom appeared from under a hedge, with a dry dark coat and a grey horse. His master changed both in no time; for, he did not wish to be observed, and had passed several stragglers. While thus employed, he asked his servant what orders he had received from his mistress?

"I'm to ride Black Nan into Darby, and put her up at the King's Head; then take the mail for London," was the answer.

"Well?"

"When I get to London, I'm to make the best of my way to Chalcot Cottage, close to Hampstead, and tell the landlady that you and my mistress are to be there on Thursday. And on Thursday I'm to be at the Peacock at Islington with a fly to meet you."

"Right. But my plans are changed. You must go back to Corner Cottage as fast as the mare will carry you (ride her carefully for she's tired), and tell your mistress that I shall not be with her for some hours later than I expected. You can then catch the Sheffield coach, go to London by it, and do all you were at first ordered to do."

The youth had, during the colloquy, testified his joy at again seeing his master, by tapping his forefinger very rapidly against the rim of his hat.

The master galloped away (his man trotting gently down the cross lane); and, several minutes before Mr. Nobble unsuspectingly passed the tryst, the gentleman had drawn bit at the door of the Fox at Alfreton.

"Won't you get off, sir," inquired the landlord, "and tak a fettle o soommut warm? You're main wet."

"Thank you—no. Have you seen a groom pass this way lately, towards the Smithy Houses?" He wished to ascertain whether his servant had been hanging about needlessly.

The landlord, not best pleased at the traveller's haste, answered that he had seen a sight o' stragglers pass towards the Smithy Houses that day; but couldn't tell which on um was grooms, and which on um wasn't. The gentleman said no more, but rode leisurely off.

In a few minutes the other horseman approached, and the landlord stepped into the road ready to hold his bridle. But he trotted by also; and without asking one word about the Chesterfield mail—up or down.

"Oi wonder what's oop, doon by Pentridge and the Smithy Houses to night, lass?—some devilment of the Captain's, it's loikely," he said to his wife when he returned in-doors, "There was foot stragglers in the road all t'morn, and now, i' t' even, they're coming a horseback." The wife was sure Mr. Flip would tell them all about it when he drove up the mail in a few minutes: "that is, if he isn't in a mortal hurry to get to the Nottin'am Royal George," she added, beginning to warm the ale for Mr. Flip's purl.

"Ah," rejoined the Goodman, "Widow Tuckey maun do worse than tak him."

Meanwhile, when the old grey had put a couple of miles behind him, his rider heard that he was being overtaken once more; and, looking back, saw his old companion cantering his capital hunter a-pace.

"A grey horse and a dark coat!" ejaculated Mr. Nobble to himself as he came up. "Curse my luck! I've lost the trail of him. Yet," and he brightened up, "he may have changed coats and horses at the Fox." To solve his doubts, he brought his own horse's nose, for the third time, in a line with that of the stranger's, and one glance put him in spirits. "By George!" he exclaimed, "how delighted I am to see you again—de-lighted!" But the gentleman, whose handsome features

still identified him, did not return the compliment. He simply surmised that Mr. Nobble had changed his mind about taking a place in the mail.

"Yes, I have. I'm not going by the mail." Then he paused a minute. "I'll tell you plump and plain where I am going to. I'm going to the White Horse at Pentridge to meet the Captain, I am."

The stranger heard this with surprise and showed some alarm.

"Come, come," said Nobble; "you needn't be frightened; one little word will put you and me quite upon the square. But here comes the mail: wait till she passes, and then I'll mention it." In another minute Mr. Flip had parted the speakers with his team at a canter; his coach-lamps glimmering in the damp, commencing twilight. When the equestrians joined again in the wake of the mail, Nobble leant to one side of his saddle confidently, and whispered, "Rivets!"

His companion hesitated before he gave the countersign.

"The truth is," he said, "I belong to no society, and have no secrets. What I do politically, I do from motives quite independent of any man—"

"Except Lord Wordley," interrupted the other sneeringly; "I know all about you; though you may believe that I don't. You are the gentleman they call the Young Squire. You were going straight home to Crookston; but one of the letters you received at the bar of the Royal George gave you our countersign, and persuaded you to go to the Pentridge meeting instead."

"You are a delegate, perhaps," replied the person addressed, trying to conceal his surprise.

"Yes, I am. An Eastern delegate, and I say again—Rivets!"

"Double-headed!" was the answer.

After a pause, during which each was considering what direction the conversation should take, now that the relations towards each other were necessarily more confidential, Nobble attributing his companion's silence to mistrust, said fiercely, "I tell you what, I don't hold with the snivelling of you Nobs on our side, one bit: it's rank cowardice. It's my belief that you're going to persuade the Nottingham Captain to turn tail."

"I am not accountable to you, sir, for my proceedings," said the so-called Young Squire.

"Perhaps not." Mr. Nobble added, "I did not see you at the Nottingham meeting last night."

"I was not there," was the answer. Mr. Nobble smiled. "But I know exactly what was done." Mr. Nobble frowned and growled.

He passed a minute moodily and in silence; then broke out with:

"Well, it's of no use your coming into these parts to pour cold water upon a good cause. The Captain has got his men together,

up to the mark. Well armed, mind you, and he means to do it. We mean to do it to-night. You're too late down here—you or any of your Nobs either—with hang-back speeches and cold-blooded persuasions about patience, and constitutional proceedings."

"We try to convince the people of the Truth: to undo the monstrous deceptions some of their leaders are palming upon them," said the Young Squire; "and, although I have taken no part in politics lately—having been abroad—I shall go on trying."

"Don't try that game on with the Captain, or you'll get the worst of it," rejoined Nobble, hoarsely. "The blood of his people is up—boiling over; and you'd better not cool it down, I can tell you."

"Whether you mean that as a menace or a warning," returned the gentleman, firmly, "is of no consequence. I am not here to quarrel with any man."

"Perhaps you're afraid."

The Young Squire was not bound to hear this insult, for they had overtaken groups of working men and boys; some talking earnestly as they walked; some clashing pikes awkwardly over their shoulders. Others carried long black links as big as bludgeons, to be lighted up by-and-by, as torches. A few were snapping the locks of muskets and pistols, to try them. There was noise enough to drown a louder growl than Mr. Nobble's.

They both dismounted at the White Horse at Pentridge. An ostler took charge of the thorough-bred, and led it to the stable; but the young Squire said he was going on immediately, and had his old grey tied to a ring in the horse-trough; for which purpose, way was made for it by the loiterers that hung about the house, and were fast augmenting. Each new comer inquired if anything had been done; or, if not, if anything was to be done, and was answered that the Captain and the titling men were still deliberating in the parlour. Perhaps the gentlemen on horseback had brought the word they were waiting for.

When Nobble entered the inn parlour, the Nottingham Captain was studying, by the light of a single candle, a map, which had displaced beer-jugs and pipes upon the slopped and gritty table.

"Yes," he said to the men standing round, as he traced a route with his finger. "We must sweep the villages round, first. From every house one man and one gun, and no less. At Lane End, the Wingfield men will meet us. Then, on to the Butterley Iron Works for cannon, and as many men as we can get: then to Topham's Close, through Ripley and Condor to pick up the Swanwick men. After that, in a body through Alfreton, Somercotes, over Pye Bridge, to East-wood. There, in Nottingham Forest, all the Nottingham boys are assembled—thousands. The town will be ours in half an hour."

"What are you waiting for?" asked one of the men at the table impatiently.

"I am waiting for the Norwich delegate: he is to bring us word of the exact time of the other risings," replied the Captain.

"Here he is!" said a voice at the door; and Nobble came forward. The Captain started up. "Well," he said, abruptly, "what's the hour to be?"

"Ten o'clock," said Nobble.

"Everywhere?"

"Everywhere. Are you ready?"

"To a man," replied the Captain. "It's high nine, now." Rolling up the map and grasping it like a truncheon, he went to the door. A minute or two was spent in earnest conversation with Mr. Nobble; whose travelling-companion overheard a portion of his statements, and knew them to be either exaggerations or untruths. The Nottingham Captain, fired and excited by them, tightened his apron—already twisted up at the waist over his grey kerseys and brown great coat (the Captain, when at home, was a frame-work knitter)—waved his paper truncheon, and proceeded to address the scarcely distinguishable groups that buzzed and clattered their pikes before the ale-house, in the thickening twilight, made darker by close, ceaseless rain. Silence having been called, he told them that, at ten o'clock that night, the whole country—England, Ireland, Scotland, "and France"—was to rise;—that their job was merely to besiege Nottingham, and to take it; that the soldiers in Nottingham barracks were all on their side; that the great Nottingham meeting, the night before, was crowded with red-coats, who sided with the people; that the people had turned out armed to the teeth, awaiting their own arrival in Nottingham forest; that the northern clouds were drifting down to sweep all before them in other places; and that, each man would have a hundred guineas and plenty of rum as soon as the town was taken. That seventy-five thousand men were at that moment marching into London from the west; and seventy-five thousand more from the east; that the keys of the Tower of London were already in the hands of the Hampden Club; that the Mint, the Mansion House, Carlton Palace, the Bank of England, and the City of Westminster, would be in possession of their friends and allies by the morning. He ended with some doggerel verses; which he repeated with the fervour of an inspired poet invoking the sublimest images. The auditory greeted him with cries of—Down with the borough-mongers! Down with the tax-eaters! Liberty and Parliamentary Reform! The men cheering and shouting while the boys danced about and fired pistols in the air: all entreating to be led to Victory or Death.

The Young Squire, hitherto an unnoticed spectator, now stepped forward; and, in that

strong and musical voice which had influenced many a larger and rougher auditory, besought a hearing. "Who was he?" some asked. "The gentleman they call t' Young Squire," others answered. "O, t' Young Squire, was he? Well, we've heered nout but what's good o' t' Young Squire, and we'll heer him now." The young Squire then boldly declared that the information brought to them was false. The northern clouds (meaning the Yorkshire delegates and their followers) had dispersed, and the Nottingham men had passed resolutions at the meeting on Saturday night, in favour of peaceful measures; not a soldier appeared among them.

An exasperated voice near the horse-trough, "That's a lie!"

And they might look for a tent or a dozen armed reformers in Nottingham forest in vain. (General cries of "You know nout about it!") As to a general rising, he could state from his own knowledge that such a measure had never been so much as proposed either in London or elsewhere. He implored them vehemently, even passionately, to refrain from playing into the hands of the government, by giving it excuses for inflicting tyrannical measures on the country, under pretence of putting down rebellion. He assured them that every step which they ventured to take from that spot with the objects they had in view, would be a step towards their own destruction.

There was a murmur amongst the crowd—a low deliberate hum—as if, discussing what had been heard, it wavered. This was quickly noticed by the leaders, and a short, deep conference took place between Nobble and the Captain. The weaver stepped forward before the Squire could utter another word; and, speaking loudly and significantly said:

"Let me ask this wonderful Young Squire one question: Are you," he continued, turning to that gentleman, "or are you not, putting up for Shutbury, Lord Wordley's rotten-borough?"

The Young Squire promptly answered that he was the unopposed candidate for that borough; and, was proceeding to state that he should go into parliament for the single purpose of advocating the rights of the people, when a storm of groans and hisses stopped him. He was denounced by turns as one of the borough-mongering crew; as a traitor; and as having sold himself to the aristocracy. There was a pressure against the door-way of the inn where he stood; and he would have been roughly handled if, in the thick twilight, he could have been distinguished from those who surrounded him. But Mr. Nobble stepped forward; and, under pretence of fair play, proposed that, as the Young Squire had cast a doubt upon the staunchness of the Nottingham men, somebody should go forward to the forest and bring back word

whether any of them were encamped there or not. The son of the host of the White Horse, young Tanner, who was at his elbow, cocked a pistol, and ground out between his teeth :—

"If he has lied, we'll shoot him!"

The Captain clapped the lad on the shoulder, and said he was the very boy for the job.

"Take the Young Squire's horse," he said, "and gallop to Eastwood and back as fast as you can make it go."

The owner protested strongly against this arrangement, and darted towards the horse to prevent its being untied; but was held back in the iron grasp of the Captain, who said :

"No, no; we musn't trust turncoats out o' sight!"

In spite of sturdy resistance, the gentleman was overpowered by numbers. The Captain did not lose another minute, and ordered the tithing men to tell off their gangs; for it was getting near the appointed hour.

"Now's your time, or never!" he exclaimed. "Light up!"

A blazing furze branch was brought from the kitchen-hearth. Each leader of ten men lit his pitch and oakum torch, and moved luridly amongst the crowd to pick out his own followers. The gleaming banners spat and crackled in the rain, shedding foggy rings of light that hardly lessened the gloom. The messenger, as he mounted the Squire's horse, could not distinguish the van from the rear of the little army; nor see in which direction they were turning their faces. Above the buzz of excitement and plashing of feet, he heard the voice of the Captain—

"To the iron-works first; and then a man and a gun from every house between this and Nottingham! Look to your prisoner!"

"Prisoner!" repeated the scout, as he dug his heels into the flanks of the grey gelding, and galloped away through the murk: "the Young Squire'll have a many fellow-prisoner to keep company wi' him afore it's long. Them that can fight, and won't fight, ought to be made to fight."

THE WORLD OF INSECTS.

AND why should not insects have a world of their own, just as well as you and I? Is the Butterfly's Ball and the Grasshopper's Feast a bit more unreal than Almack's or the Carlton? Don't grasshoppers feast? don't they and their family connections, the locusts, gormandise, and devour, and swallow up everything? Don't butterflies flutter, and flirt, and perform the polka and the varsoviene in the air, and display their fine clothes with gratified vanity? Did no young dragon-fly, with brilliant prospects, ever get married to the horseleech's daughter, and repent of the alliance after it was too late? If philosophic fiction has created a Micro-

me gas, that is to say a Mr. Littlebig, romantic natural history may surely record the saying and doings of the Megamicroses, or the Messieurs Biglittles. Vast souls often dwell in undersized bodies. Neither Napoleon nor the Duke could have earned sixpence a-day by following the profession of giants at fairs; nor would they have been cordially received by the amateurs of calves in silks, liveries, powdered heads, and six feet two. They would have been found wanting when compared with specimens of masculine beauty who are hireable by addressing a prepaid letter to P. Q. R., at Mrs. Mouldfusty's, green-grocer, Outofplace Lane. Is not the succession in an Oriental empire, and in a bee-hive, regulated on exactly similar principles? The reigning sovereign keeps the nearest heirs to the throne imprisoned in palaces; now and then murdering the most promising rivals.

To know the world of insects perfectly, one must lead the life of an insect; one must be an insect one's self. And therein lies the great impediment to our knowledge. The feelings and thoughts of animals not far removed constitutionally from ourselves, we can guess at intuitively. A novelist of genius, who has closely observed human nature, is able to assume mentally, the characteristics of the leading varieties of mankind. A Thackeray, a Balzac, a Molière, a Shakspeare, can be for a time, murderers, misers, heartless worldlings, weak hypochondriacs, ambitious prelates, heart-broken parents, delicate-minded women. Every phase of life is theirs to learn, to put on, and to wear, as were they to the manor born. In like manner, an observant naturalist watches the habits and affections of his favorites, till he can become one of themselves, whenever need be. Audubon could have acted the vulture, the humming-bird, the passenger-pigeon, or the Canada goose, to the life, when once he had been fitted with the feather costume. Jules Gérard could change himself into a perfect camel, hyena, or lion, by an act of his will. Were Yarrel clad in a herring's scales, he would never commit the mistake of migrating annually from the Arctic circle to the British coasts, as prated of by Pennant; nor would he, disguised as a goatsucker, ever dream of sucking goats. Do you think that Ducrow didn't perfectly understand every caprice of the horse, as well as the horse himself did,—perhaps better? Is not the person defective in intelligence and sympathy who cannot thoroughly enter into the feelings of a dog or an elephant? The world of such creatures lies within the limits of the world of men, though our world extends considerably beyond the boundaries of theirs.

But the world of insects lies not on our terrestrial map. Perhaps it may have a closer relationship with life as it goes in the planets Venus and Mercury, which, from their nearer approach to the sun, may abound with a gigantic insect population. We are

cut off from all communion with insects; we cannot look into their eyes, nor catch the expression of their faces. Their very senses are merely conjectural to us; we know not exactly whether they have ears to hear, a palate to taste, or a voice to speak. For, a noise mechanically produced is not a voice. The rattling of a stork's bill is not a vocal sound, any more than the alarum of a rattlesnake's tail; neither is the chirping of the male crickets, which is produced by the rubbing together of their wing-cases, as has been proved by rubbing them together artificially. The death's-head sphynx causes consternation among the superstitious by the peculiar squeaking sound which it has the power of making; but it is not a cry emitted from the chest through the throat and mouth. If, therefore, in an existence of metempsychosis, it were possible for the transmigrated soul to remember its own successive biographies, it would be well worth while passing a few hundred years as an insect of varying species and order, before returning to the human form to write a history of past adventures. That would be the true way to learn the secret intrigues of the world of insects. To complete the natural historical education gained by such an erratic existence—to make the grand tour, in short—one ought to pass a term of apprenticeship in the shape of a plant. A newly-arrived traveller from the vegetable kingdom, come home to the realms of flesh and blood, would explain what pleasure a leaf or flower can have in catching flies—why the sensitive-plant shrinks from the most friendly caress—how the night-scented stock knows that the sun is below the horizon, while the atmosphere still remains light and warm—whether pain or pleasure be the cause which keeps the moving-plant in a perpetual fidget—and whether camellia-blossoms like to be cut, and to go to balls in pretty girls' hairs. One would willingly risk all the personal tortures to be apprehended from entomologists, market-gardeners, and lady's-maids, to be able to solve these mysteries.

But before venturing on terms of equality into the society of beetles and flies, of moths and maggots, the adventurous tourist would do well to prepare himself by the study of some short elementary guide-book. And, by good luck, lately, the insects themselves, by the hands of their elected and official secretary,* Mr. J. W. Douglas, have invited us to honour them with a portion of our attention, by sundry plausible arguments. They urge that, while business must be attended to—which it is as religiously as if it comprised the whole duty of man—the intervals of business must be attended to, as an antidote to the contraction of the range of thought which is the result of over-devotion to mercantile affairs or party politics. They plead that there is no employment for leisure hours

more innocent in itself, or more productive of benefit than the study of themselves, the insects; that their number (ten thousand species in Great Britain only), their beauty, accessibility, and at the same time their mysteriousness, especially adapt them to become the subjects of popular recreation. That, without any desire to undervalue literature or art, it may still be believed that man and his doings, his follies and his crimes, engage too much of our attention. That, the acquaintance of insects once made, ennui and the want of something to do will vanish, every step will be on enchanted ground, and on all sides the prospect will become more and more enticing. That the inducement to go out of doors—the walk with a purpose in view, so different to that most dreary of employments, walking for the sake of exercise—is itself no mean advantage. Then, the collector will want to know something about the nature of the specimens he has acquired, and will begin to study their habits, forms, and relationships. This calls into exercise the practice of patience, of minuteness and accuracy of observation, and, eventually, of cautiousness in induction and generalisation; all of which, besides their value as elements of mental discipline, are qualities serviceable in an eminent degree in the business of life. Well reasoned, insects, by the mouth of your plenipotentiary!

What is an insect? Their interpreter answers:—The popular notion includes under that term spiders, crabs, and lobsters, which have some resemblance to insects; but they may be separated at once by the fact that they have more than six legs. The flea, however, is so anomalous in its structure, that its proper place in the scale of insects is disputed, some authors contending that it belongs to one order, and some to another. A true insect has six legs, four wings, an external skeleton, and undergoes certain metamorphoses. In the class *Diptera*, the perfect insect has two fully-developed wings; but has also two merely rudimentary ones, which are distinguished by the names of halteres, or poisers. The breeze-fly, and all two-winged flies, are examples. In *Coleoptera*, the perfect insect has two fully-developed wings, and two wing-cases which cover the wings. The sexton-beetle and all other beetles are examples. So that the complement of four wings is still in existence, although one pair may be leathery and of little use in flight, as with crickets and grasshoppers, or even very minute and scarcely apparent. All insects proceed from eggs laid by the female parent, except in some cases where the eggs are hatched within the body of the mother; and in a few others, as the aphides, where the ordinary method is supplied for a certain number of generations by a process which has had various interpretations, but which is quite anomalous. For the various phases of metamorphosis amongst insects—which is the

* To the Entomological Society of London.

grand law of insect life—you must make an intimate acquaintance with the creatures themselves.

One of the greatest misfortunes in this world is to lie under a wrongful imputation. Many are the victims whose success has thus been paralysed by calumny, misunderstanding, or even by accidental mal-a-propos. Give a dog a bad name, and hang him. The same thing happens in the world of moths. The human public reasons thus: Some moths eat clothes, therefore all moths are to be exterminated. The minor proposition is made to contain the major. I have seen people assassinate the gamma-moth (so called because its wings bear the mark of a Greek letter γ), and the great goat-moth, whose caterpillar lives in decayed willow-trees, in revenge for an imagined attack on a Sunday coat. "Oh! what a big moth!" shout the anti-lepidopterous rioters. "Down with him! Kill him! No moth! No moth! If little moths make holes in my pantaloons, this one is capable of eating them up at a meal." Whereas, he may be as innocent of devouring cloth as a codfish is of swallowing iced champagne. He may even be a dress-producer, a veritable working silkworm moth, who has already done his duty in his time, for what his furious persecutors know. Moreover, it is not in the shape of moths, but of caterpillars, that clothes-moths commit their ravages. An actual offender (*Tinea pellionella*), a very Jew of moths, to be found throughout all the stages of his existence amongst "old clo'," is a brown-complexioned fellow, once a caterpillar with a moveable case, who nourished himself then in some dark closet, where he made a living out of unused garments, and a house which he carried about with him. Unlike many a Christian, he provides well for his children, by depositing his eggs in the land of plenty, and thus taking forethought for their maintenance and bringing-up. Another guilty culprit is *Tinea biselliella*, a sleek, yellow-plush gentleman, who sidles away as you look at him. He spends his time, from youth to maturity, if not under the ermine, yet in as near an approach to it as circumstances permit. He has a dear liking for furs of all sorts; and when he comes out at last in his robes of state, no one would believe how much dirty work had been necessary to procure him all this finery.

After drawing the line between innocent and malefactor moths, let us add a word of extenuation in favour of cockroaches. As people keep cats to clear their houses of mice; as hedgehogs are converted into domestic pets, that they may munch up the black-beetles that swarm by night; so, sometimes, it may be expedient to keep cockroaches, that they may indulge their instinct of exterminating a still greater nuisance than themselves; namely, bugs. Webster's Voyage of the Chanticleer informs us that cockroaches are plentiful at Saint Helena. Pre-

vious to the ship's arrival there, the crew had suffered great inconvenience from bugs; but the cockroaches no sooner made their appearance, than the bugs entirely disappeared. The cockroach preys upon them, leaving no sign or vestige where they have been; and is, so far, a most valuable and praiseworthy insect. Mr. Newman also acquaints the Entomological Society with the same fact (discovered in a London boarding-house), that the cockroach seeks with diligence, and devours with great gusto, the common bed-bug. He is confident of his informer's veracity, but discreetly refrains from mentioning names or places.

Although we may fancy butterflies and sphinx-moths to be the gayest creatures in existence, it is nevertheless true, that the private lives of certain lepidoptera are troubled by secret sorrows which a casual looker-on would hardly suspect. One of their insidious enemies is a plant! Herbivorous animals are well known, and are supposed to fall in conveniently with the natural order of things; a less obvious idea is, that there exist, in revenge, carnivorous vegetables. The larva of a hawk-moth, *Hepialus virescens*, is preyed on by the caterpillar-fungus, *Sphæria Robertsii*. The caterpillar buries itself in the earth, to undergo transformation into the perfect insect; while it is lying dormant there, the fungus inserts a root into the nape of its neck, feeds and flourishes on the animal matter, and, without destroying the form of the victim, at last converts it into a mummy. A similar slaughter of larvæ is performed in Van Diemen's Land by a representative fungus, the *Sphæria Gunnii*; and another, *Sphæria Sinensis*, carries on the same work in China; while the *S. entomorrhiza* tries it even in these parts, so far removed from cannibalism. Living wasps have been taken in the West Indies with a fungus growing from their bodies. Still, animal-feeders are not common among plants, unless we include those orchidaceous flowers which exasperating cultivators assert to live entirely on hair. Talking of hair, the skin disease by which our locks are shorn, is believed to be of fungous origin. In unfavourable seasons, silkworm caterpillars are destroyed by myriads from the ravages of a minute cryptogamic plant, or mould-fungus, which takes a fancy to grow on their outer integument.

Is everything that crawls a VERMIN, deserving only to be crushed underfoot? Mr. Douglas's report of insect-doings would lead us to respite many humble victims, and at least amuse ourselves for a while with their drolleries, before carrying the sentence of death into execution. The students at our Inns of Court eat their way onward, and advance to their adult professional state by dining in Hall; so do moths. The larvæ of the pretty little *Exapate gelatella* are internal feeders, living principally in the decayed branches of white-thorn, and, in a

great many instances, under the bark of the living stem. The apple-moth, a beautiful little creature, whose wings are studded with silvery-shining specks, as though they were inlaid with precious gems, is hatched from an egg laid, in the middle of June, in the crown of an infant apple. As soon as the egg hatches, the young grub gnaws a tiny hole, and soon buries itself in the substance of the future fruit. He takes care to make himself a ventilator and dust-hole, and then progresses to the centre of the apple, where he feeds at his ease. When within a few days of being full-fed, he, for the first time, enters the core through a round hole gnawed in the hard, horny substance, which always separates the pips from the pulp of the fruit, and the destroyer now finds himself in that spacious chamber which codlings in particular always have in their centre. From this time he eats only the pips, never again tasting the more common pulp, which hitherto had satisfied his unsophisticated palate; now, nothing less than the highly-flavoured aromatic kernels will suit his tooth, and on these, for a few days, he feasts in luxury, till it is time for him to eat his way out again. The larvæ of many moths and butterflies, when tired of their present existence, hang themselves; but the act is anything but suicidal. They step out of their coffins as neat as new pins, smartly dressed in a fresh suit of clothes. What do you think of eggs that grow, and of eggs that have eyes? It would certainly be convenient if we could introduce a race of poultry whose oval produce should possess the former qualification of increasing in size as they lay in the egg-basket, though inexperienced housekeepers might feel a little trepidation at the angry glances shot by eggs threatened with a higher temperature than that required for hatching. In the insect world, such facts do occur. The abominable though glossy and gauzy-winged fly, which is the development of the odious gooseberry-grub, lays very soft and half-transparent white eggs. After the first day, these horrid eggs begin to grow, and before the end of a week, they have grown to three times their original size. The head of the egg always lies towards the tip of the gooseberry-leaf, for the convenience of looking out for squalls, and is remarkable for having two black eyes, placed very far apart, and quite on the sides; indeed, so far asunder are these eyes, that, like the hind-buttons on the coat of a certain illustrious coachman, it is very difficult to bring both into the same field of view.

The humming-bird sphinx does not sit down to take its meals, but feeds, as the lark sings, on the wing, which most people would fancy to be very uncomfortable as well as difficult. Alderman Toocentistun would not like to have to swallow his turtle and punch in a state of bodily suspense, maintained by a rapid vibration of his upper extremities.

Jenny Lind may represent the Swedish nightingale; but she cannot personate either the Swedish lark or the Swedish sphinx. But insect eccentricities are endless. Aphides think fit, during the whole of summer, to increase, like tiger-lilies, by buds; just as Sir Thomas Browne wished that mankind could be increased, like willow-trees, by cuttings. A late intelligent oran-otang was fond of taking a lady's shawl, politely and with permission, from her back, and of strutting up and down with it displayed on his own hairy shoulders; in like manner, the larva of the *Coleophora grypheapanella* moth borrows the loan of a coat from a rose-leaf. Not content with eating the parenchyma, or fleshy substance between the upper and under skins of the leaf, it makes a covering for its body from the upper skin only, using as much as it wants for its wrapper, which it folds round itself in the most becoming style, leaving one end open, through which it protrudes the head and segments bearing the legs; thus attired, it walks about, always carrying its clothing with it, which, as the tenant grows, is increased from time to time by additions of more leaf. Comical things are these moving cones; like tipsy men, they seem always to be in danger of toppling over. But this mishap rarely occurs; and if by accident the caterpillar do lose its hold, it does not fall, but swings down gently by a silken thread kept in readiness for such accidents. One of the beautiful metallic *Adelæ*, or long-horned moths, *Nemotois cupriacellus*, is a sort of Amazon, having sent the gentlemen of their community so completely to Coventry, that the male insect is unknown to collectors; none but females have ever been captured. Our only hope of getting at the masculine gender lies in the astuteness of Mr. Doubleday. That gentleman, a very Ulysses in his dealings with things that fly by night, discovered the attractive powers of fallow blossoms, and about the same time found out that a mixture of sugar and beer, mixed to a consistence somewhat thinner than treacle, is a most attractive bait to all the *Noctuinae*. The revolution wrought in our collections, and our knowledge of species since its use, is wonderful. Species that used to be so rare, that it seemed hopeless to think of possessing them, and others not then known at all, have become so plentiful by the use of sugar in different localities, that they are a drug in the hands of collectors and dealers. The mixture is taken to the woods, and put upon the trunks of the trees, in patches or stripes, just at dusk. Before it is dark, some moths arrive, and a succession of comers continues all night through, until the first dawn of day warns the revellers to depart. The collector goes, soon after dark, with a bull's-eye lantern, a ring-net, and a lot of large pill-boxes. He turns his light full on the wetted place,

at the same time placing his net underneath it, in order to catch any moth that may fall. Some species are very fond of this trick; others sit very unconcerned; and others, again, fly off at the very first glance of the bull's-eye. Once in the net, a moth is easily transferred to a pill-box, where it will remain quiet until the next morning. There are some sorts, however, that will not put up with solitary confinement so easily, and fret themselves, that is, their plumage; so it is better to pin and kill them at once. It is of no avail to use sugar in the vicinity of attractive flowers, such as those of willow, lime, or ivy. Wasps and bats also come, but not to the collector's assistance. The former are attracted by the sweets, the latter by the moths; and you may see them go in before you, and pick off a beauty that you would not have lost for half-a-dozen sugar-loaves. Armed with sugar as a spell, the collector becomes a sorcerer, and summons to his presence at his will the moths which, like spirits, lie all around, invisible to mortal ken. To carve your sweetheart's name on the trunk of a tree is an old-fashioned piece of gallantry not yet quite obsolete, nor without a certain effect on the fair one; but if you are courting a four-winged lady-love, stick by night on the bark of your tree as many lumps of sugar dipped in ale as there are letters in her surname *MOTH*, and the chances are that she will be captivated and captured by the bait.

We hear a deal of talk about good men and women; pray what is a good insect? Because, sometimes one of the *Geometrinæ* will come to your lure, and occasionally a good beetle. Not rarely, a good insect may be seen sunning himself on the banks of fens. The *Camberwell Beauty* and the *Purple Emperor* are both, it seems, good butterflies. The Captain Bold of *Halifax* has a rival in the bolder butterfly, *Thecla quercus*. In July, you may see the females walking about on the leaves of the oak-trees, sunning themselves, while the males are fluttering in attendance, or are pertinaciously holding a tournament in honour of their high-born dames. In these pugnacious encounters they maul each other severely, and you can hardly capture a male whose wings are free from scratches and tears. It is a pity that some sort of entomological police cannot compel such quarrelsome butterflies to keep the peace. The *Tineinæ*, not so named because they are tiny, have also their characteristic peculiarities. When basking on palings, *Argythia* sits with her head downwards, as in a posture of reverence; *Gracilaria* and *Ornix*, on the contrary, hold up their heads, bold and pert; *Elachista* looks as if it tried to squeeze itself into the wood, and *Nepticula* hugs a corner or crevice, and then, as if not satisfied with its station, hurries off to seek another, with a self-important swagger truly ridiculous in such a little creature. Owing to the variety of economy amongst

the larvæ of these tiny moths, there can be no general rules laid down for finding them; some are on the leaves, some roll up the leaves, others mine in their substance; some are in the flowers, others in the seeds; some are in the stems, others are in the roots; some wander about naked as when they were born, others make garments neat and tidy, or rough and grotesque. There is only one rule to be observed—Search a plant all over, and at different times of the year. You may not find the species of which you were in quest; but, then, you may discover another whose economy is unknown; or, as already more than once has happened, one not hitherto even seen in the perfect state. Thus, if you collect the dry flower-heads of wild marjoram in spring, and put them in a box in-doors, you will soon see what appear to be some of the dry calyces of the flowers, separated from the mass and walking about. Each of these contains a living larva of *Gelechia subocella*, which has made itself in the previous autumn a portable dwelling out of two or three of the flowers, in which it will remain until the following July, when the perfect moth will emerge. In their habitat among the dry florets these cases can scarcely be distinguished from them.

In addition to the obvious and unavoidable difficulties which entomologists have to encounter, they have to bear up against the martyrdom of contempt which the vulgar-minded public inflicts upon them. They are ignominiously nicknamed bug-hunters, and are regarded as a species of lunatic at large. But astronomers and chemists have been equally despised. Galileo, Tycho Brahe, Priestly, and even Davy, have been pitied in their time, especially in the early part of their career, as foolish enthusiasts, whose proper place would be the madhouse, if they were not harmless. To this day, Newton, though looked up to as a philosopher by all, is looked down upon as a madman by many. What was the good, the crowd inquired, of star-gazing and pulling the elements to pieces? But great good, and profit, and safety, and lofty wisdom have been derived from studying the structure of the heavens—that is, of the universe—and from investigating the essential nature of the crude materials which compose our globe. It is not during its infancy that a science displays its wealth and lavishes its benefits. Entomology may have results in store that we wot not of. Mr. Douglas is persuaded that many things in the structure and physiology of man that are obscure may receive a light from the study of the anatomy and reproduction of insects.

But how are you to fathom the mysteries of insect economy, if you do not pursue and familiarise yourself with insects? Notwithstanding which, it is quite true, as our secretary says, that society throws a wet blanket over entomology in all its branches. Take your water-net, and go to a pond or stream

in quest of water-beetles, and the passers-by if they notice you at all, will invariably think you are fishing; or, if they see what you are taking, will ask you if your captures are for baits. If you say Yes, they will think yours a profitable employment; if you say No, you may add as much more in exculpation as you like, you will only pass for a fool. So much for the popular appreciation of natural history—and for your encouragement. Crabbe's allusion to insects as "untax'd and undisputed game," is no longer correct as regards its second epithet; you cannot enter a wood anywhere without fear of being as unceremoniously dealt with as a felon. For example, Coombe Wood, formerly one of the great localities for insects of all kinds, and the grand resort of the London collectors, is now sacred to game alone, under the protection of a royal duke. A collector dare no more set foot within its hallowed precincts than a poacher; it is possible even that, on what was a public road quite through the wood, a sly poacher might be more leniently dealt with than an indiscreet entomologist. A keeper cannot believe that any man would go about in search of insects only; he thinks that an insect-net is only a blind for attacks upon the nests of pheasants, and has a strong suspicion that beneath the pill-boxes in your coat pocket you have a gin for a hare.

Mr. Douglas gives various British localities that are rich in curious and rare insects. If the student is inclined to peep at a few easily-reached and well-stocked insect preserves on the other side of the Channel, where he will not be exposed to the insolence of Coombe Wood guardian angels, let him try the tops of the cliffs at Etretat, near Havre, taking good care not to break his neck—the sandy warren which lies between the camps of Wimereux and Ambleteuse, near Boulogne-sur-Mer—the forest of Guînes and Licques, on calcareous hills—the forest south of Hazebrouck, on an alluvial, loamy, clayey plain; the oaks alone are worth going to see—the forest of Watteu, I think, on gravel—and the track of marsh, pasture, ponds, ditches, cultivated land, and silted-up estuary, which lies within the irregular triangle whose three corners are Calais, St. Omer, and Dunkerque. In three weeks or a month, he will capture as many novelties as will take him a twelve-month to examine and investigate, unless he be a very learned and practised hand.

For house-flies in abundance, the reader is recommended to go to Brixen, in the Tyrol. "Never saw so many flies in my life!" was the most striking entry in the travellers' book at the Grand Hotel of something or other. One fine September's afternoon I had to beg for dinner there; but, on being shown into the dining-room, objected to the landlord that I did not like eating in a room hung with black. Tablecloth, curtains, and everything else that should have been white, was black. His answer was a flourish with his

napkin, when the dark coating arose in buzzing swarms, and filled the air with a living cloud, whose density almost impeded vision across the room. This pleasing travelling souvenir reminds me that a popular account of the early life of house-flies (not blue-bottle blow-flies) is a desideratum. Many people believe that little flies grow into big ones, just as lambs become sheep in the course of time. If you want extra-sized flies, go to the German forests; they will astonish you, especially if you do not wear gloves. The only insects to which they can be likened are Hood's famous pair of moths—Mam-moth and Behe-moth.

THE CHAIN.

THE bond that links our souls together
Will it last through stormy weather?
Will it moulder and decay
As the long hours fleet away?
Will it stretch when Time divide us,
When dark weary hours have tried us?
If it look too poor and slight
Let us break the links to-night.

It was not forged by mortal hands,
Or clasped with golden bars and bands,
Save thine and mine, no other eyes
The slender link can recognise:
In the bright light it seems to fade—
And it is hidden in the shade;
While Heaven or Earth have never heard,
Or solemn vow, or plighted word.

Yet what no mortal hand could make,
No mortal power can ever break;
What words or vows could never do,
No words or vows can make untrue;
And if to other hearts unknown
The dearer and the more our own,
Because too sacred and divine
For other eyes save thine and mine.

And see, though slender, it is made
Of Love and Trust, and can they fade?
While, if too slight it seem, to bear
The breathings of the summer air,
We know that it could bear the weight
Of a most heavy heart of late,
And as each day and hour has flown
Stronger for its great burden grown.

And, too, we know and feel again
It has been sanctified by pain,
For what God deigns to try with sorrow
He means not to decay to-morrow;
But though that fiery trial last
When earthly ties and bonds are past,
What slighter things dare not endure
Will make our Love more safe and pure.

Love shall be purified by Pain,
And Pain be soothed by Love again;
So let us now take heart and go
Cheerfully on, through joy and woe;

No change the summer sun can bring,
Or even the changing skies of spring,
Or the bleak winter's stormy weather,
For we shall meet them, Love, together!

LAID UP IN TWO LODGINGS.

SECOND.—MY LONDON LODGING.

I LAST had the honour of presenting myself to the reader's notice in the character of an invalid laid up in lodgings at Paris. Let me now be permitted to reappear as an invalid laid up, for the time being, and very uncomfortably, too, in a London cab. Let it be imagined that I have got through the journey from Paris, greatly to my own surprise and satisfaction, without breaking down by the way; that I have slept one night at a London hotel for the first time in my life; and that I am now helplessly adrift in a cab, looking out for Furnished Apartments as near as may be to my doctor's place of abode. These are the few prefatory circumstances of my present narrative on which it is needless for me to enlarge. I mention them as hints which may serve in the reader's fancy to make the appropriate prologue to a sick man's tale.

The cab is fusty, the driver is sulky, the morning is foggy—I feel that a dry dog-kennel would be a pleasant refuge for me by comparison with the miserable vehicle in which I am now jolting my way over the cruel London stones. On our road to my doctor's neighbourhood we pass through Smeary Street, a locality well-known to the inhabitants of Northern London. I feel that I can go no further. I remember that some friends of mine live not far off, and I recklessly emancipate myself from the torment of the cab, by stopping the driver at the very first house in the windows of which I see a bill with the announcement that Apartments are to Let.

The door is opened by a tall muscular woman, with a knobbed face and knotty arms besprinkled with a layer of grate-dust in a state of impalpable powder. She shows me up into a second-floor front bedroom. My first look of scrutiny is naturally directed at the bed. It is of the negative sort, neither dirty nor clean; but, by its side, I see a positive and unexpected advantage in connection with it, in the shape of a long mahogany shelf, fixed into the wall a few inches above the bed, and extending down its whole length from head to foot. My sick man's involuntary egotism is as predominant an impulse within me at London as at Paris. I think directly of my invalid's knick-knacks: I see that the mahogany shelf will serve to keep them all within my reach when I am in bed; I know that it will be wanted for no other purpose than that to which I design to put it; that it need not be cleared for dinner every day, like a table, or disturbed when the servant cleans the room, like a moveable stand. I satisfy myself that it holds out all

these rare advantages to me, in my peculiar situation, and I snap at them on the instant—or, in other words, I take the room immediately.

If I had been in health, I think I should have had two cogent reasons for acting otherwise, and seeking apartments elsewhere. In the first place, I should have observed that the room was not very clean or very comfortably furnished. I should have noticed that the stained and torn drugget on the floor displayed a margin of dirty boards all round the bedchamber; and I should no sooner have set eyes on the venerable arm-chair by the bedside than I should have heard it saying privately in my ear, in an ominous language of its own, "Stranger, I am let to the Fleas: take me at your peril." Even if these signs and portents had not been enough to send me out into the street again, I should certainly have found the requisite warning to quit the house written legibly in the face, figure, and manner of the landlady. I should probably have seen something to distrust and dislike in everything connected with her, down even to her name, which was Mrs. Glutch; and I should have thereupon taken refuge in some polite equivocation (uttering probably, that long-established formula of courteous deceit which is expressed by the words, "Call again in an hour"),—should have got into the street under false pretences, and should not have ventured near it any more for the rest of the day. But as it was, my fatal invalid prepossessions blinded me to everything but the unexpected blessing of that mahogany shelf by the bedside. I overlooked the torn drugget, the flea-peopled arm-chair, and the knotty-faced landlady with the ominous name. The shelf was bait enough for me, and the moment the trap was open, I collected my train of medicine bottles and confidently walked in.

It is a general subject of remark among observant travellers, that the two nations of the civilised world which appear to be most widely separated as to the external aspects of life respectively presented by them, are also the two which are most closely brought together by the neighbourly ties of local situation. Before I had been many days established in Smeary Street, I found that I myself, in my own circumscribed sphere, offered a remarkable example of the truth of the observation just recorded. The strong contrast between my present and my past life was a small individual proof of the great social contrasts between England and France. I have truly presented myself at Paris, as living independently in a little toy house of my own; as looking out upon a scene of almost perpetual brightness and gaiety; and as having to attend on me people whose blessed levity of disposition kept them always cheerful, always quaintly characteristic, always unexpectedly amusing, even to the languid

eye of a sick man. With equal candour I must now record of my in-door life in London, that it was passed with many other lodgers, in a large house without a vestige of toy-shop prettiness in any part of it. I must acknowledge that I looked out upon drab-coloured houses and serious faces through a smoke-laden atmosphere; and I must admit that I was waited on (so far as the actual house-service was concerned) by people whose cloudy countenances seemed unconscious of a gleam of inner sunshine for days and days together. Nor did the contrast end here. In my lodgings at Paris, I have represented myself as having about me a variety of animate and inanimate objects which I might notice or not just as I pleased, and as using my freedom of choice in a curiously partial and restricted manner, in consequence of the narrowing effect of my illness on my sympathies and powers of observation. In my London lodging, I enjoyed no such liberty. I could not get even a temporary freedom of selection, except by fighting for it resolutely at odds and ends of time. I had but one object which offered itself to my observation, which perpetually presented itself, which insisted on being noticed, no matter how mentally unfit and morally unwilling my illness rendered me to observe it; and that object was—my landlady, Mrs. Glutch.

Behold me then, now, no longer a free agent; no longer a fanciful invalid with caprices to confide to the ear of the patient reader. My health is no better in Smeary Street than it was in the Champs Elysées; I take as much medicine in London as I took in Paris; but my character is altered in spite of myself, and the form and colour of my present fragment of writing will, I fear, but too surely reflect the change. I was a sick man with several things to discourse of—I am a sick man with only one topic to talk about. I may escape from it for a few sentences at a time, in these pages, as I escaped from it for a few minutes at a time in Smeary Street; but the burden of my song will be now, what the burden of my life has been lately—my landlady. I am going to begin with her—I shall go on with her—I shall try to wander away from her—I shall get back to her—I shall end with her. She will mix herself up with everything I have to say; will intrude on my observations out of window; will get into my victuals and drink, and drops, and draughts, and pills; will come between me and my studies of character among maids-of-all-work, in this too faithful narrative, just as she did in the real scenes which it endeavours to represent. While I make this acknowledgment as a proper warning to the reader that I have changed into a monotonous sick man since we met last, let me add, in justice to myself, that my one subject has at least the advantage of being a terrible one. Think of a sick fly waited on by

a healthy, blue-bottle, and you will have a fair idea of the relative proportions and positions of myself and Mrs. Glutch.

I have hardly been settled an hour in my second-floor front room before the conviction is forced on my mind that Mrs. Glutch is resolved to make a conquest of me—of the maternal, or platonic kind, let me hasten to add, so as to stop the mouth of scandal before it is well opened. I find that she presents herself before me in the character of a woman suffused in a gentle melancholy, proceeding from perpetual sympathy for my suffering condition. It is part of my character, as a sick man, that I know by instinct when people really pity me, just as children and dogs know when people really like them; and I have, consequently, not been five minutes in Mrs. Glutch's society, before I know that her sympathy for me is entirely of that sort of which a large assortment is always on hand, and all orders for which, when Self-Interest is the customer, can be invariably executed with promptitude and despatch. I take no pains to conceal from Mrs. Glutch that I have found her out; but she is too innocent to understand me, and goes on sympathising in the very face of detection. She becomes, in spite of her knobbed face, knotty arms, and great stature and strength, languidly sentimental in manner, the moment she enters my room. Language runs out of her in a perpetual flow, and politeness encircles her as with a halo that can never be dimmed. "I have been so anxious about you!" is her first morning's salutation to me. The words are preceded by a faint cough, and followed by an expressively weary sigh, as if she had passed a sleepless night on my account. The next morning she appears with a bunch of wall-flowers in her mighty fist, and with another faint prefatory cough, "I beg pardon, sir; but I have brought you a few flowers. I think they relieve the mind." The expressively weary sigh follows again, as if it would suggest this time that she has toiled into the country to gather me the flowers at early dawn. I do not find, strange as it may seem, that they relieve my mind at all; but of course I say, "Thank you."—"Thank you, sir," rejoins Mrs. Glutch—for it is part of this woman's system of oppressive politeness always to thank me for thanking her. She invariably contrives to have the last word, no matter in what circumstances the courteous contention, which is the main characteristic of our daily intercourse, may take its rise. Say that she comes into my room and gets into my way (which she always does) at the very time when she ought to be out of it—her first words are necessarily, "I beg pardon." I growl (not so brutally as I could wish, being weak.) "Never mind!"—"Thank you, sir," says Mrs. Glutch, and coughs faintly, and sighs, and delays going out as long as possible. Or, take another

example :—"Mrs. Glutch, this plate's dirty."—"I am much obliged to you, sir, for telling me of it."—"It isn't the first dirty plate I have had."—"Really now, sir?"—"You may take away the fork ; for that is dirty too."—"Thank you, sir."—Oh for one hour of my little Parisian portress ! Oh for one day's respite from the politeness of Mrs. Glutch !

Let me try if I cannot get away from the subject for a little while. What have I to say about the other lodgers in the house ? Not much ; for how can I take any interest in people who never make inquiries after my health, though they must all know, by the frequent visits of the doctor and chemist's boy, that I am ill ? The first floor is inhabited by a mysterious old gentleman, and his valet. He brought three cart-loads of gorgeous furniture with him, to fit up two rooms—he possesses an organ, on which, greatly to his credit, he never plays—he receives perfumed notes, goes out beautifully dressed, is brought back in private carriages, with tall footmen in attendance to make as much noise as possible with the door-knocker. Nobody knows where he comes from, or believes that he passes in the house under his real name. If any aged aristocrat be missing from the world of fashion, we rather think we have got him into Smeary Street, and should feel willing to give him up to his rightful owners on payment of a liberal reward. Next door to me, in the second floor back, I hear a hollow cough and sometimes a whispering ; but I know nothing for certain—not even whether the hollow cough is also the whisperer, or whether they are two, or whether there is or is not a third silent and Samaritan person who relieves the cough and listens to the whisper. Above me, in the attics, there is a matutinal stamping and creaking of boots, which go down-stairs, at an early hour, in a hurry, which never return all day, but which come up-stairs again in a hurry late at night. The boots evidently belong to shopmen or clerks. Below, in the parlours, there seems to be a migratory population, which comes in one week and goes out the next, and is, in some cases, not at all to be depended upon in the matter of paying rent. I happen to discover this latter fact, late one night, in rather an alarming and unexpected manner. Just before bedtime I descend, candle in hand, to a small back room, at the end of the passage, on the ground floor (used all day for the reception of general visitors, and empty, as I rashly infer, all night), for the purpose of getting a sofa cushion to eke out my scanty allowance of pillows. I no sooner open the door and approach the sofa than I behold, to my horror and amazement, Mrs. Glutch coiled up on it, with all her clothes on, and with a wavy, coffee-coloured wrapper flung over her shoulders. Before I can turn round to run away, she is on her legs, wide awake

in an instant, and politer than ever. She makes me a long speech of explanation, which begins with "I beg pardon," and ends with "Thank you, sir ;" and from the substance of which I gather that the parlour lodgers for the past week are going away the next morning ; that they are the likeliest people in the world to forget to pay their lawful debts, and that Mrs. Glutch is going to lie in ambush for them all night, in the coffee-coloured wrapper, ready the instant the parlour door opens, to spring out into the passage and call for her rent.

What am I about ? I am relapsing insensibly into the inevitable and abhorrent subject of Mrs. Glutch, exactly in accordance with my foreboding of a few pages back. Let me make one more attempt to get away from my landlady. If I try to describe my room, I am sure to get back to her, because she is always in it. And, moreover, excepting the fatal bedside shelf which first lured me into inhabiting Smeary Street, there is nothing in my London apartment worth notice—nothing particularly new, nothing particularly clean, nothing particularly comfortable. Suppose I get out of the house altogether, and escape into the street ?

All men, I imagine, have an interest of some kind in the locality in which they live. My interest in Smeary Street is entirely associated with my daily meals, which are publicly paraded all day long on the pavement. In explanation of this rather original course of proceeding, I must mention that I am ordered to eat "little and often," and must add, that I cannot obey the direction if the food is cooked on the premises in which I live, because (my stomachic sensibilities being delicate) I have had the misfortune to look down certain underground stairs and to discover that in the lowest depth of dirt, which I take to be the stairs themselves, there is a lower deep still, which is the kitchen at the bottom of them. Under these peculiar circumstances, I am reduced to appeal for nourishment and cleanliness in combination, to the tender mercies (and kitchen) of the friends in my neighbourhood, to whom I have alluded at the outset of this narrative. They commiserate and help me with the readiest kindness. Devoted messengers, laden with light food, pass and repass all day long between their house and my bedroom. The dulness of Smeary Street is enlivened by perpetual snacks carried in public procession. The eyes of my opposite neighbours, staring out of window, and not looking as if they cared about my being ill, are regaled from morning to night by passing dishes and basins, which go westward full and steaming, and return eastward eloquently empty. My neighbourhood knows when I dine, and can smell out, if it please, what I have for dinner. The early housemaid kneeling on the doorstep can stay her scrubbing hand and turn her pensive

head and scan my simple breakfast, before I know what it will be myself. The mid-day idler, lounging along Smeary Street, is often sweetly reminded of his own luncheon by meeting mine. Friends who knock at my door may smell my dinner behind them, and know how I am keeping up my stamina, before they have had time to inquire after my health. My supper makes the outer darkness savoury as the evening closes in; and my empty dishes startle the gathering silence with convivial clatter as they wend on their homeward way the last thing at night. Nothing, in brief, can be much more mystifying to the public, or more perfectly satisfactory to myself, than the arrangements for feeding me in the cleanest way on the most appetising diet, which the ready kindness of my friends has induced them to contrive. But there is, nevertheless, one unavoidable obstacle which mars the perfect working of my domestic commissariat. There is one obstinate spoke which will insert itself disconcertingly in our otherwise smoothly-running wheel. That spoke is (need I mention it?)—Mrs. Glutch.

It is, I am well aware, only to be expected that my landlady should resent the tacit condemnation of her cleanliness and cookery implied in the dietary arrangements which I have made with my friends. If she would only express her sense of offence by sulking or flying into a passion, I should not complain; for in the first case supposed, I might get the better of her by noticing nothing, and, in the second, I might hope, in course of time, to smooth her down by soft answers and polite prevarications. But the means she actually takes of punishing me for my too acute sense of the dirtiness of her kitchen, are of such a diabolically ingenious nature, and involve such a rapidly continuous series of small persecutions, that I am rendered, from first to last, quite powerless to oppose her. I know that if I proceed to describe her plan of annoyance I shall also return to my one prohibited topic. But now that I have touched on it I must positively unbosom myself on this subject—even though by so doing I let Mrs. Glutch force herself back into that perpetual state of prominence from which I have been in vain previously trying to exclude her. The reader has witnessed my efforts to effect my own emancipation, and knows therefore, by experience, that if I end by passively submitting to my landlady, my policy of resignation has not been adopted without a cause.

Mrs. Glutch, then, instead of visiting her wrath on me, or my food, or my friends, or my friends' messengers, avenges herself entirely on their tray-cloths and dishes. She does not tear the first nor break the second—for that would be only a simple and primitive system of persecution—but she smuggles them, one by one, out of my room, and merges them inextricably with her own property, in the grimy

regions of the kitchen. She has a power of invisibly secreting the largest pie-dishes, and the most voluminous cloths, under my very eyes, which I can compare to nothing but sleight of hand. Every morning I see table utensils, which my friends lend me, ranged ready to go back, in my own room. Every evening, when they are wanted, I find that some of them are missing, and that my landlady is even more surprised by that circumstance than I am myself. If my friends' servant ventures to say, in her presence, that the cook wants her yesterday's tray-cloth, and if I refer him to Mrs. Glutch, the immovable woman only sniffs, tosses her head, and "wonders how the young man can have demeaned himself by bringing her such a peremptory message." If I try on my own sole responsibility to recover the missing property, she lets me see, by her manner at the outset, that she thinks I suspect her of stealing it. If I take no notice of this manoeuvre, and innocently persist in asking additional questions about the missing article, the following is a sample of the kind of dialogue that is sure to pass between us:—

"I think, Mrs. Glutch"—

"Yes, sir!"

"I think one of my friends' large pudding-basins has gone down-stairs."

"Really, now, sir? A large pudding-basin? No: I think not."

"But I can't find it up here, and it is wanted back."

"Naturally, sir."

"I put it on the drawers, Mrs. Glutch, ready to go back, last night."

"Did you, indeed, sir?"

"Perhaps the servant took it down-stairs to clean it?"

"Not at all likely, sir. If you will please to remember, you told her last Monday evening—or, no, I beg pardon—last Tuesday morning that your friends cleaned up their own dishes, and that their things was not to be touched."

"Perhaps you took it down-stairs then yourself, Mrs. Glutch, by mistake?"

"I sir! I didn't. I couldn't. Why should I? I think you said a large pudding-basin, sir?"

"Yes, I did say so."

"I have ten large pudding-basins of my own, sir."

"I am very glad to hear it. Will you be so good as to look among them, and see if my friends' basin has not got mixed up with your crockery?"

Mrs. Glutch turns very red in the face, slowly scratches her muscular arms, as if she felt a sense of pugilistic irritation in them, looks at me steadily with a pair of glaring eyes, and leaves the room at the slowest possible pace. I wait and ring—wait and ring—wait and ring. After the third waiting and the third ringing, she reappears, redder of face and slower of march than before, with

the missing article of property held out before her at arm's length.

"I beg pardon, sir," she says, "but is this anything like your friends' large pudding-basin?"

"That is the basin itself, Mrs. Glutch."

"Really, now, sir? Well, as you seem so positive, it isn't for me to contradict you. But I hope I shall give no offence if I mention that I had ten large pudding-basins of my own, and that I miss one of them."

With that last dexterous turn of speech, she gives up the basin with the air of a high-minded woman, who will resign her own property, rather than expose herself to the injurious doubts of a morbidly suspicious man. When I add that the little scene just described takes place between us nearly every day, the reader will admit that, although Mrs. Glutch cannot prevent me from enjoying on her dirty premises the contraband luxury of a clean dinner, she can at least go great lengths towards accomplishing the secondary annoyance of preventing me from comfortably digesting it.

I have hinted at a third personage in the shape of a servant in my report of the foregoing dialogue; and I have previously alluded to myself (in paving the way for the introduction of my landlady), as extending my studies of human character, in my London lodging, to those forlorn members of the population called maids-of-all-work. The maids—I use the plural number advisedly—present themselves to me to be studied as apprentices to the hard business of service, under the matronly superintendence of Mrs. Glutch. The succession of them is brisk enough to keep all the attention I can withdraw from my landlady constantly employed in investigating their peculiarities. By the time I have been three weeks in Smeary Street, I have had three maids-of-all-work, to study—a new servant for each week! In very different ways, the three attract my attention, by showing me that the spectacle of my illness makes a decided impression on them. They are not sentimentally affected by it; they do not exhibit the sweet compassion of my Parisian portress—but still they ARE impressed, and that one fact gives them a claim to attention in my estimation. In reviewing the three individually before the reader, I must be allowed to distinguish them by numbers instead of names. Mrs. Glutch screams at them all indiscriminately by the name of Mary, just as she would scream at a succession of cats by the name of Fuss. Now, although I am always writing about Mrs. Glutch, I have still spirit enough left to vindicate my own individuality, by abstaining from following her example. In obedience, therefore, to these last relics of independent sentiment, permit me the freedom of numbering my maids-of-all-work, as I introduce them to public notice in these pages.

Number One is amazed by the spectacle of my illness, and always stares at me. If I fell ill one evening, went to a dispensary, asked for a bottle of physic, and got well on it the next morning; or, if I presented myself before her at the last gasp, and died forthwith in Smeary Street, she would, in either case, be able to understand me. But an illness on which medicine produces no immediate effect, and which does not keep the patient always groaning in bed, is beyond her comprehension. Personally, she is very short and sturdy, and is always covered from head to foot with powdered black, which seems to lie especially thick on her in the morning. How does she accumulate it? Does she wash herself with the ordinary liquid used for common-place ablutions; or does she take a plunge-bath every morning under the kitchen grate? I am afraid to ask this question of her; but I contrive to make her talk to me about other things. She looks very much surprised, poor creature, when I first let her see that I have other words to utter in addressing her, besides the word of command; and seems to think me the most eccentric of mankind, when she finds that I have a decent anxiety to spare her all useless trouble in waiting on me. Young as she is, she has drudged so long over the wickedest ways of this world, without one leisure moment to look up from the everlasting dirt on the road at the green landscape around, and the pure sky above, that she has become hardened to the saddest, surely, of human lots before she is yet a woman grown. Life means dirty work, small wages, hard words, no holidays, no social station, no future, according to her experience of it. No human being ever was created for this. No state of society which composedly accepts this, in the cases of thousands, as one of the necessary conditions of its selfish comforts, can pass itself off as civilised, except under the most audacious of all false pretences. These thoughts rise in me often, when I ring the bell, and the maid-of-all-work answers it wearily. I cannot communicate them to her: I can only do my best to encourage her to peep over the cruel social barrier which separates her unmerited comfortlessness from my undeserved luxury, and encourage her to talk to me now and then on something like equal terms. I am just succeeding in the attainment of this object, when Number One scatters all my plans and purposes to the winds, by telling me that she is going away. I ask Why? and am told that she cannot bear being railed at and a-hunted about by Mrs. Glutch any longer. The oppressively polite woman who cannot address me without begging my pardon, can find no hard words in the vocabulary hard enough for the maid-of-all-work. "I am frightened of my life," says Number One, apologising to me for leaving the place. "I am so little and she's so big. She heaves things at my head, she does. Work as hard as you may, you

can't work hard enough for her. I must go, if you please, sir. Whatever do you think she done this morning? She up, and druv the creases at me." With these words (which I find mean in genteel English, that Mrs. Glutch has enforced her last orders to the servant by throwing a bunch of water-creases at her head), Number One curtsseys and says "Good-bye!" and goes out patiently once again into the hard world. I follow her a little while, in imagination, with no very cheering effect on my spirits—for what do I see awaiting her at each stage of her career? Alas, for Number One, it is always a figure in the likeness of Mrs. Glutch.

Number Two fairly baffles me. I see her grin perpetually at me, and imagine, at first, that I am regarded by her in the light of a humorous impostor, who shams illness as a new way of amusing himself. But I soon discover that she grins at everything—at the fire that she lights, at the cloth she lays for dinner, at the medicine-bottles she brings upstairs, at the furibund visage of Mrs. Glutch, ready to drive whole baskets full of creases at her head every morning. Looking at her with the eye of an artist, I am obliged to admit that Number Two is, as the painters say, out of drawing. The longest things about her are her arms; the thickest thing about her is her waist. It is impossible, with the best intentions, to believe that she has any legs, and it is not easy to find out the substitute which, in the absence of a neck, is used to keep her big head from rolling off her round shoulders. I try to make her talk, but only succeed in encouraging her to grin at me. Have ceaseless foul words, and ceaseless dirty work clouded over all the little light that has ever been let in on her mind? I suspect that it is so, but I have no time to acquire any positive information on the subject. At the end of Number Two's first week of service Mrs. Glutch discovers, to her horror and indignation, that the new maid-of-all-work possesses nothing in the shape of wearing-apparel, except the worn-out garments actually on her back; and, to make matters worse, a lady-lodger in the parlour misses one of a pair of lace-cuffs, and feels sure that the servant has taken it. There is not a particle of evidence to support this view of the case; but Number Two being destitute, is consequently condemned without a trial, and dismissed without a character. She too wanders off forlorn into a world that has no haven of rest or voice of welcome for her—wanders off, without so much as a dirty bundle in her hand—wanders off, voiceless, with the unchanging grin on the smut-covered face. How shocked we should all be, if we opened a book about a savage country, and saw a portrait of Number Two in the frontispiece as a specimen of the female population!

Number Three comes to us all the way from

Wales; arrives late one evening, and is found at seven the next morning, crying as if she would break her heart, on the door-step. It is the first time she has been away from home. She has not got used yet to being a forlorn castaway among strangers. She misses the crows of a morning, the blessed fields with the blush of sunrise on them, the familiar faces, the familiar sounds, the familiar cleanliness of her country home. There is not the faintest echo of mother's voice, or of father's sturdy footfall here. Sweetheart John Jones is hundreds of miles away; and little brother Joe toddles up door-steps far from these to clamour for the breakfast which he shall get this morning from other than his sister's hands. Is there nothing to cry for in this? Absolutely nothing, as Mrs. Glutch thinks. What does this Welsh barbarian mean by clinging to my area-railings when she ought to be lighting the fire; by sobbing in full view of the public of Smeary Street when the lodgers' bells are ringing angrily for breakfast? Will nothing get the girl in-doors? Yes, a few kind words from the woman who passes by her with my breakfast will. She knows that the Welsh girl is hungry as well as home-sick, questions her, finds out that she has had no supper after her long journey, and that she has been used to breakfast with the sunrise at the farm in Wales. A few merciful words lure her away from the railings, and a little food inaugurates the process of breaking her in to London service. She has but a few days allowed her, however, to practise the virtue of dogged resignation in her first place. Before she has given me many opportunities of studying her character, before she has done knitting her brows with the desperate mental effort of trying to comprehend the mystery of my illness, before the smut has fairly settled on her rosy cheeks, before the London dirt has dimmed the pattern on her neat print gown, she, too, is cast adrift into the world. She has not suited Mrs. Glutch (being, as I imagine, too offensively clean to form an appropriate part of the kitchen furniture)—a friendly maid-of-all-work, in service near us, has heard of a place for her—and she is forthwith sent away to be dirtied and deadened down to her proper social level in another Lodging-house.

With her, my studies of character among maids-of-all-work come to an end. I hear vague rumours of the arrival of Number Four. But before she appears, I have got the doctor's leave to move into the country, and have terminated my experience of London lodgings, by making my escape with all convenient speed from the perpetual presence and persecutions of Mrs. Glutch. I have witnessed some sad sights during my stay in Smeary Street, which have taught me to feel for my poor and forlorn fellow-creatures as I do not think I ever felt for them before, and which have inclined me to doubt for the

first time whether worse calamities might not have overtaken me than the hardship of falling ill.

A TALE OF A POCKET ARCHIPELAGO.

OPPOSITE Paimpol, on the coast of Brittany, is a little cluster of islands, known by the ambitious name of the Archipelago of Brehat. It is quite a pocket-archipelago. The whole number of the inhabitants is not above fifteen hundred; but (as is natural, it seems, to insular people), this diminutive nation is famous for pride and exclusiveness. The man of Brehat will not admit that he is a Frenchman, or even a Breton—he is a man of Brehat. High and low—for there are such distinctions even there—not only think themselves superior to all the rest of the world, but look upon strangers with dislike and contempt. The women carry this prejudice so far, that if an unlucky being of their sex accidentally come over from the continent to seek employment, every back is turned upon her, and there is not a single word of greeting. She is soon compelled to go and seek a livelihood elsewhere. The men are more cosmopolitan, for they are all sailors, almost from infancy. But, however far they may go in their voyages, they always return to seek a wife on their native soil; and, when old age compels them to settle down, they return to their national bigotry and exclusiveness.

The Archipelago of Brehat is composed of one large island, or rather two joined together by a causeway, constructed by Vauban, and a number of islets and rocks, now completely uninhabited, but formerly covered with buildings of various kinds, fortresses or monasteries—it is not certain which. When I first saw Brehat, it was from the rocks above Paimpol. The great ocean-tide was coming in, accelerated by a violent wind, and seemed to threaten to bury the pocket archipelago in its vast foaming waves. There was nothing in the reputation of the place, to induce me to visit it; and I should have been content with this distant view, had it not been for the peculiar circumstances which I am now about to relate.

I had just arrived—wandering through Brittany without any special object—from Saint Brieuc, in the coupé of a diligence, or, rather, in what was called the coupé of what was called a diligence. It was a sort of miserable omnibus, with two aristocratic seats in front, divided off by a ragged leathern curtain. Peasants and their wives, with children, dogs, and fowls, occupied the hinder compartment. I had secured one of the places in front; the other was occupied by a good-looking, bright-eyed young man, whose dress and demeanour at once pointed him out as an officer in some stout merchant ship. From his conversation I learned that he belonged to that part of the world. On the

other hand, he seemed far from inclined to be communicative about his own affairs; and when we leaped to the ground, in front of the Hôtel de Rennes, he gave me a hearty shake of the hand, a farewell nod, and disappeared, without any intimation that it was likely we should meet again.

My walk along the coast took place on the morrow; and after having admired a scene which is always admirable—the coming in of the Atlantic tide against a rocky shore protected by outlying islands—I had begun to think that my presence was no longer absolutely required in that part of the world, and that I might as well go back over the hills to Saint Eriec. It was in this mood of mind that I saw coming towards me, walking with an uncertain step, my travelling companion of the previous day. I at first thought that he was doing as I was, namely, admiring the prospect; but it soon appeared, from his awkward and confused manner: not only that he was no student of the picturesque, but that he was working up his courage to speak to me on a point which interested him personally. The salutation was more cordial on my side than on his. We talked a little, of course, about the prospect, and about the weather; and then he said, quite timidly,

“Have you no intention of visiting our Archipelago of Brehat?”

“None in the world,” I was about to reply, but the word “our” struck me. “You are then from Brehat?” I inquired, answering the question by another.

He seemed glad of the opportunity to tell his story, being evidently in a different mood from that in which I had previously seen him. We sat down on a wall belonging to a ruined cottage, with our faces to the wind; which sometimes compelled us to be watchful lest our hats should be blown away, and brought the taste of salt to our lips.

“Yes,” said the young man. “I am from Brehat; a wild country for strangers, though worth visiting for a day, but to all those born upon it as dear as if it were one of the sunny isles of Greece. You must go and see for yourself, however, what kind of place it is. I shall try to tempt you, for I have a selfish interest to satisfy. It is now exactly a year since I left it. I went to Nantes, and joined my ship, bound to Trebisonde, in the Black Sea. We have traded ever since in the Mediterranean—a fine piece of water. Have you ever been there?”

I replied that I had; but added, smiling, that this was a very meagre outline of a story. He admitted that it was. After all, he had nothing particular, he said, to tell. The fact was, “he loved somebody,” a very plain, simple, and common fact, quite uninteresting to a stranger. But, who was this somebody? Madeleine. A very definite description! To him, however, the name had

prodigious significance. It meant—as I found when he gradually warmed into confession—the first meeting on the dancing-ground on Sunday evening near the beach when he returned after his first voyage, begun when almost a boy—a desolate orphan—and concluded when quite a man; it meant the admiration and love which had flashed through his frame when he first beheld her coming along beneath some stunted trees amidst her comrades in age, who seemed born only to be her attendants; it meant that whole bewildering evening in which, despite all rules of propriety, he danced only with her, gazed only at her, thought only of her, attended only on her, and disregarded all the anger, and the jealousy, and the chatterings, and the sneers of damsels who thought themselves at least equally entitled to homage from the young and handsome sailor. “For I am rather good-looking to a woman’s eye,” said our young friend, naively passing his fingers through his hair. I laughingly assented, and listened with attention, when, after this explosion of feminine or half-civilised vanity, he went on to relate how Madeleine was the daughter of the richest proprietor on the island, and how her father had promised her in marriage to an old retired admiral, whom fancy had led to establish himself during the latter years of his life at Brehat.

“I was not the man to let this sacrifice take place with the sneaking complacency of your town’s-folk,” said the sailor (who, by the way, told me that his name was Cornic). I went and asked Madeleine’s hand, and was of course refused, because my wealth was not sufficient. I objected that wealth was a thing to be got, and that a man who had all his limbs and a strong will to command them, with the hope of Madeleine in the future, was capable of doing wonders. The old man said something about the sacredness of his promise to the admiral; but, as he had resolved not to let his daughter be married for a couple of years, intimated that if I could make a good offer within that time, why he would take the matter into consideration. So I set off on my voyage to Trebisonde: not, you may be sure, without having had some private talk with Madeleine, and obtaining from her a promise that she would never marry the admiral until I gave up all claim to her hand. For, as you may imagine, my dear sir, Madeleine did not hesitate a moment between me and the crusty old sea-wolf who had cast his eyes on her, and whose mode of courtship was to watch her through a telescope from his window as she went in and out of her house or wandered towards the fields. I am quite sure she will keep her promise; still, woman’s nature is weak. I have heard no news from Brehat since I left; and now that I am so near, I am afraid to go over. I have tried to learn in Paimpol some news of the doings in the island; but nobody knows anything of them. It is true

that a wicked old woman has told me that Madeleine Bosc was married to M. Renard a week or two ago; but this must be a falsehood. Neither she nor her father would dare to deceive me so. I am terrible, sir, when I am angry. There is no knowing what I might do. We are not Bretons at Brehat. We come from the south. We are Basques or Spaniards. You know how those people treat the mistress who has betrayed them, and the man who is her accomplice.”

Young Cornic had risen, and was walking rapidly to and fro along the edge of the rock, making threatening gesticulations towards the far-out island of Brehat. I now understood that he wanted me, having confidence—I know not for what reason—in my discretion and willingness to oblige, to go over to Brehat and ascertain the truth of the report which had agitated him. He feared that if he went himself, he might be driven to commit some crime. As my journey had no particular goal, it was not a very great sacrifice on my part to consent. I took his instructions, promised to return on the morrow, went with him to Paimpol, hired a bark, and, the weather having become quite fine, in a few hours reached Brehat.

A wall of crumbling granite encircles the principal island, and allows nothing to be seen from the sea but the summits of numerous small hills, always crowned with rocks. As you advance inland, however, the country becomes more pleasing. In few parts of France, indeed, is the soil [more industriously made use of. The fields extend to the very base of the rocks, and are covered with a rich vegetation. Between them run narrow pathways, quite sufficient for the use of a district which contains not a single cart nor even a single horse. There are a good many cows; and carriage is performed by means of asses. Hamlets, composed of neat and clean houses, and with names ending in “ker” and “ec” are scattered here and there. The most considerable is called Le Bourg; and it was towards this, that I directed my steps from the landing-place.

There was of course no hotel or respectable inn of any kind, but I managed to obtain hospitality in a cabaret, where I saw some sailors drinking. The hostess was a surly old lady who looked at me askance as I consumed an early dinner, for which I had promised to pay well. She could not make out what I wanted at Bourg; but did not choose to indulge in any inquiries. I was obliged to begin the conversation myself, and soon found that without plump questioning I should never reach the point I aimed at. I had asked who were the principal inhabitants of the island? I had been asked in return, what I wanted to know for? At length, I boldly mentioned the name of M. Bosc, and succeeded in learning that he had gone to France, perhaps to Paris.

“And Madeleine,” said I—

The old lady came and stood full before me and looked, with something like fury, in my countenance.

"What business had I," she at length asked, "to speak of the bride of Kerwareva?"

These words at once told me, that poor Cornic's fate was, in reality, decided. I remained silent, and the hostess, thinking that she had sufficiently rebuked me, went away to attend to her domestic duties. But, it seems that her mind continued to work upon the thoughts I had suggested. She came back to me with a gentler expression of countenance, sat down near me, and said,

"What curiosity can a stranger have about the bride of Kerwareva?"

I replied that I did not know what she meant; that I had once heard that M. Bosc had a pretty daughter; and that I asked about her, simply because I had nothing else to ask about.

"In that case," replied she, "take my advice and do not speak of her to any one else in this island. The friends of M. Bosc are numerous and quarrelsome. I have no time to tell you her story now, but I will say something about it this evening, before you go to bed. If you wish to see her," she added, lowering her voice, "take a brisk walk towards the northern point of our island, pass Kerwareva, just look at the pretty little house you will see built there, and manage to reach the Peacock's Hollow at the time of low tide. Approach it softly; and, if you respect sorrow, do not speak to what you see."

So saying, the hostess—in whom insular exclusiveness had thus yielded to female garrulity—bustled away to attend to some new customer, and I started in the direction she had pointed out. I soon reached Vauban's Causeway, and, having passed a hamlet that immediately succeeded it, entered upon a country totally different in character from that which I have described. Everything wore a wilder and more savage aspect. Rocks more frequently broke through the soil, and rose to a greater height, in strange forms. The vegetation was evidently less active. Heath and brushwood stretched in great masses here and there. The few houses were of a different character, lower and more primitive. Kerwareva, which I soon reached, was composed of mere huts, built of loose stone, and thatched with turf. But, a little way from it, amidst some rocks, rose, as I had been led to expect, an elegant little house, that looked as much out of place there, as a London villa in the midst of the Libyan desert. The shutters were closed, and it did not at first seem to be inhabited; but, as I passed near it, I saw a very respectable-looking man—no doubt the Admiral—sitting in the doorway, in an attitude of despondency, but looking with intent eagerness towards the north. Although curious to scan the countenance of another of the actors in the sad story, I refrained from

approaching; and continued my walk towards the Peacock's Hollow.

As soon as I had passed the last houses of the village, all traces of human presence disappeared. I entered a realm of rock, earth, air, and water, intermingled. First, came a desert heath, sinking here and there into a salt-marsh; then an inclined plain of meagre turf; then two enormous blocks of granite, rising up like the fragmentary walls of a ruined tower of gigantic magnitude. I looked round for the form I expected to see. All was silent, save when the thousand murmurs of the waves on every side were borne along by a gust of wind. I advanced slowly between the seeming walls, meeting with no obstacle but some huge stones, rounded by the continual action of the water, which at present, however, was far beneath. Soon a kind of subterranean roar warned me to be cautious; and presently I saw a vast abyss open before me, descending to invisible depths and widening towards the beach below, where the water at its lowest ebb was playing in the light of the sun, now far down towards the horizon. Across the centre of the gulf lay a huge block of stone, like a bridge, which, as I afterwards learned, is ever lifted up by the high tide as it rushes in, and ever falls back into its old place as solid and firm as ever.

It was easy to see that it was impossible to approach the Peacock's Hollow except by the way I had come. The huge rocks inclining inward rose far over-head; not even a goat could have moved along their surface. I began to fear some catastrophe, but, on looking back, suddenly saw a light graceful figure, clothed in white, advancing by the way I had come. I made myself small against the rock to let it pass. There was no doubt in my mind that this was Madeleine, the bride of Kerwareva. She passed fearlessly by me and drew near the edge of the gulf. I retired a little, but gazed anxiously at her. She took up a pebble, and, having murmured some words that resembled an incantation, cast it below. Then she listened for awhile, clapped her hands joyously, exclaimed:—"This year—this year!" and came running back with the lightness of a fawn. I again allowed her to pass: and, having no further curiosity to satisfy at the Peacock's Hollow, slowly retraced my steps.

On reaching the heath that precedes Kerwareva, I was surprised to see Madeleine crouching down near the path, and seeming to watch eagerly for my coming. I affected to pass by without seeing her, but she ran towards me and took hold of my sleeve, smiling in a deprecating manner, as if she feared I might be offended. Let me admit that my lip quivered, and my eyes grew dim. I did not need the revelations of mine hostess of Le Bourg to explain these unequivocal signs. The poor thing had evidently lost her reason. Though what she now said, appeared at first plain and sensible enough.

"You are the first stranger I have met at that false foolish place," said she, "and, although I would not notice you then, my heart shrank as if you might be the bearer of evil news. You seemed to look at me, and not to care about the curiosities of our island. This is not proper in a stranger, but if you are a messenger the case is quite different. We can talk together here—and if you stoop down, the admiral will not be able to see us with his telescope."

I did not know what to say. It was quite evident that an impassable barrier had now been raised between Cornic and Madeleine. To speak of his presence on the mainland would be sheer cruelty.

"What is the reason you threw the pebble into the gulf, my child?" said I, evading the subject she wished to talk of.

"I am not your child," she replied haughtily. "I am the child of M. Bosc, the richest man on this island, which is the reason why they all want to marry me—all the old admirals, I mean. But, my heart is sealed up, and he who can open it is far away. He will come back, for the pebble speaks truth. All the young girls of Brehat try that experiment; but those that sigh for him come away disappointed—looking red and foolish. The pebbles they throw do not go straight down, but tinkle, tinkle against the rock—one tinkle for every year of maidenhood. Mine only makes no noise, so that, of course, Cornic must come back soon. For, how else am I to be married to him?"

I tried to proceed, but she stood in my path.

"All is wrong here," touching her forehead. "I won't deceive you; but I am not so mad as not to see you come from Cornic. Why, if you did not know all about my story and pity me, you would be quite frightened! But you only look grave and puzzled. Ha! perhaps you are one of those who say he went down to the bottom of the sea. But this is nonsense. I must be married to him within the year; and drowned men don't marry. Hush! let us talk of something else; here is my husband!"

I had little time to notice the contradiction of the latter part of this speech; for, the old Admiral, who had approached over the low country, now came close upon us. He walked slowly, as if not to interrupt our colloquy rudely; but evidently was surprised. I looked at him apologetically, and he bowed.

"Madeleine," said he, very gently and affectionately, "the air is getting cold as the evening comes on. You know that the father bade me be careful about your health."

She smiled quite kindly at her old husband; and took his arm with a demure look. I went away after exchanging salutes and glances of intelligence with him; and did not turn back for some time. I then saw this

strange couple walking sedately towards the little house among the rocks.

"What a sad story I shall have to tell to poor Cornic!" thought I.

The hostess at Le Bourg had very little to add to what I had learned; but, as I kept the secret of my interview with Madeleine to myself, I had to endure a long and confused narrative. The news of Cornic's death had been brought—probably invented—purposely. Then, Madeleine had been overpersuaded by her father to marry the Admiral. What were the precise means used to influence her were not known; but on leaving the church she escaped from the company, and was found, some hours afterwards, throwing pebbles into the Peacock's Hollow, and exclaiming that she was to be married within the year. This happened but a few months after Cornic's departure, which makes it reasonable to suppose that the young man was deluded to go away, simply that the marriage might take place without opposition. From that time forward, Madeleine never perfectly recovered her reason, though she lived on good terms with the Admiral, who treated her rather as his daughter than his wife. He had often been heard bitterly to regret having been the cause of so much misfortune. He built the little cottage at Kerwareva, in order that his poor wife might indulge her innocent fancy without being obliged every day to take a fatiguing walk. He watched over her with tenderness, and the influence of his character was sufficient to prevent her from being disturbed in her wanderings.

"My belief is," quoth the hostess, yawning, towards the end of her story, "that Cornic will some day come back, which will be very unfortunate. If Madeleine sees him, something dreadful will happen. Should you meet a sailor of that name in your travels, tell him to keep away from Brehat."

Next day I returned to Paimpol. The first person I met was Cornic. He was watching for me. I held down my head.

"Tell me all about it," he said, with manly firmness. "I think I shall be able to bear it."

He little expected what he was to hear: and shed some bitter tears in the little room of the Hôtel de Rennes. Once, he was on the point of hastening over to Brehat, and presenting himself before Madeleine.

"She may regain her reason on beholding me," he exclaimed.

"To what purpose?" I inquired.

"You are right," he replied. "I will return to my ship at Marseilles."

This was the best he could do under the circumstances. I accompanied him back to St. Brieuc, and then we parted. He looked very miserable and agitated; and I was not quite sure of him. But he was a fine fellow, and kept his promise; and here, artistically speaking, this story ought to have an end. Life, however, is a complicated and extra-

ordinary affair, and I am obliged to add, that when, a year or two afterwards, the Admiral died, Cornic went to Brehat. His presence produced a magical effect, I suppose; but this I know—that the young widow did actually recover her reason, and was actually married to him, after all.

KEEPING THE PEACE.

Nor only by the desolated city on the far Crimean shore, and by the trembling towns upon the Euxine and the Baltic, has long-lost peace been welcomed; not only in the victorious capitals has she re-assumed her olive crown amidst the general joy, but far down here, in fertile Devon also, we have been glad to hear war's echo die away. In clear, bright cider we have drank to Peace, who blesses apple orchards, pasture lands, teeming rivers and the loom. Our little country town has lifted up its voice: squire and parson, manufacturer and yeoman, have each contributed towards banqueting the poor. Every man has given that he could and of what he had: the butcher of his meat, the baker of his bread, and the brewer of his strong ale; the schoolmaster bestowed his green to set our tables on, the bell-ringers dispensed free music cheerily, and the very wind was raised—it was a voluntary subscription of its own—to keep the clouds off, and to take care they did not rain.

The peace softly came upon us in the early morning with the south wind from the sea; with a ripple across the river and a wave upon the woodland and a shadow over the meadow grass; with the bleat of sheep and with the low of oxen and with the song of bird upon the budding bough; with the rich moist smell of the quickening earth and with the odours of a world of flowers. Riding down through the red Devon lanes and between their tall fern-clad banks, with the blue sky overhead, with ever and anon over the frequent gateways a view of purple upland, sweet and far, or of the dewy pastures and the kine close by, whereat we could not but pull rein and gaze in joy, it seemed indeed a morning made for peace—for the keeping of a restoration far happier than that the day has hitherto celebrated. The low white farms on either hand seemed almost uninhabited; many a cottage with its door wide open to the sunshine was left entirely vacant; the hammer lay unlifted on the blacksmith's anvil; the tools in the carpenters' shops. In every little hamlet, a humble but graceful tribute to the day was offered,—a garland over a cottage porch, a device of green leaves mingled with may, and archways across the paths composed of flower and bough. We passed through throngs of people in their best attire; happy fathers with their children astride upon their necks or clinging to their hands; happy mothers with infants in

their arms; happy couples, some day, perhaps, to be similarly blessed; here and there a spring-cart, laden with unlicensed numbers, jogged along,—for the distance of some of our parishioners to their metropolis is more than a holiday walk. Sometimes a burly farmer, whose occupation for that day was gone, trotted by on his earth-shaking steed; Good morrows! were as plentiful on every hand as violets and blue-bells, and the burthens of many a song flitted from group to group, as the birds twitter from tree to tree. As we reached the brow of the hill which looks straight upon the little town, we could see the bright flags dancing from the steeple, and catch the unaccustomed hum and stir. When we came upon the stone bridge that spans the sparkling river, we read the V R—in large tulip letters—upon the first triumphal arch, and heard the notes of the brass band on the school-green, as it played God Save the Queen. The shops were closed; but in place of that blank, dead, shuttered stare of theirs, smiled flowers. Upon the white-washed wall of the school-house, emptied of its little labourers, Peace shone out glorious in War's own garb of glittering laurel-leaf; on silken wings she soared from window and from housetop, and floated every way on waves of song and music; but principally she held her state upon the green, in company with her continual ally, Plenty.

Eight mighty tables there were set, and on them laid twelve hundred-weight of beef, and such an amount of cold plum-pudding as would be indigestible to print—enough for thirteen hundred stomachs. As the great throng poured in, they took their places where they could, on forms or chairs. Each had a parcel in a handkerchief,—a plate a-piece and knife, and fork, and cup, or ought to have had—for so far it was picnic—but we saw many eating without either, and enjoying themselves as much as though they had silver fingers with crests at the back of their hands and mother of pearl at their wrists; one mighty man had brought a child's doll's-plate with him, about the size of a crown-piece, and inscribed "a Present from Plymouth;" doubtless it was a pledge of affection, but it was certainly a very little one, and the huge slice of beef had to be doubled twice before it would confine itself within the tiny round; his neighbour, who was just old enough to run alone, had a tremendous soup-plate, which he very judiciously made use of, upon the occasion of a trifling shower, umbrella-wise, to cover his infant head; so many pink plates, and so many pictorial ones (mostly of a scriptural character), and so many mugs that had been apparently bestowed as the reward of merit, were probably never before seen; there was one in particular entitled "A Good Boy's," which held nearly a quart and a half, and I watched the owner (who was about sixty

years of age) put it to his lips when full, incline it gradually from an acute to a right angle, tip it bottom upward, and finally set it down empty without remark; sometimes it was only a cracked tea-cup, which made the beer and cider look both like camomile tea (we noticed indeed among the thirteen hundred, but one glass drinking vessel), but what did that matter? Clasp-knives were, upon the whole, the most fashionable cutting instruments, but we took much interest in the young lady who got on uncommonly well with a leaden spoon. There were ludicrous scenes in so great a picture, of course; but there were very beautiful ones also; a widowed father—just widowed, to judge by the new, but scanty, strip of crape round his worn hat—had cut his meat up small that the child on his knee might feed with him, and they took alternate morsels together, and alternate sips at their common mug; there was a blind girl, evidently very pleased at the many voices and the music, to whom everybody seemed kind and attentive; and a cripple, for whom the good folk made way to right and left, that he might have his meal in comfort. It was pleasant to watch the lovers taking care of their mistresses, and to mark how much flirtation can be carried on in company and over pudding; to see the play of the knives and forks grow slower and slower as the appetites of the wielders began to fail, and how the younger portion of them dropped off to sleep immediately upon having filled themselves to the uttermost, as if there was no such disease as apoplexy known; to behold the parson mount the upholsterer's steps, which had been placed in the centre of the green for that purpose, and pronounce the grace therefrom, and to see him descend from that dangerous and shaky elevation safe and sound; pleasant also when the shower came—it only lasted eleven minutes—to view the whole thirteen hundred (it was just before their dinner) making for the mere rag of canvas which scarcely covered the band, and deriving apparent comfort, if not dryness, from its mere proximity; to mark the Carvers, the Hewers of meat and the Drawers of beer getting redder and redder at their work, and endeavouring vainly to avoid a repetition of helps by dint—literally dint—of leviathan slices. To hear the speeches, too, after dinner, and over the strong ale, screamed to the thirteen hundred from the summit of the steps; how the squire gave “the Queen, with musical cheers,” which a part of the company took to mean the National Anthem, and how great tumult, but infinite loyalty thereupon ensued; how the parson declared that we were indebted for the peace to Providence rather than to our governors and our gene-

rals, which was a truer thing, perhaps, than he quite intended to say; how a stout female would on no account permit the health of the ladies to pass by, unacknowledged, and diverged from the general subject into a particular statement regarding the increase of her private family; how the wit of the little town, who had hitherto hung his head down like a peony, in blushful silence, was induced by admiring friends and beer, to propose the Squire, and who gave it as his opinion that the best of all possible peaces had happened to them that day, a good piece of roast beef, and a good piece of plum-pudding; how it was thought better, out of delicacy to many present who had lost near relatives in this unhappy war, that the health of our Crimean heroes should not be given, and how a labourer, whose only son had fallen at Alma, proposed it himself in a manner that would not have disgraced Mr. Burke—dagger and all. And so, mostly in mirth, but partly with a certain pleasant seriousness, the thirteen hundred dined. Of all that mighty company we saw but one man drunk, and even on him intoxication took a harmonising effect, and caused him to shake hands with us, with tears in his eyes, as though we were about to emigrate.

Afterwards there were sports and games enough—for the whole afternoon was holiday—amongst the children; music and dancing for the adults, and tea and gossip—gossip pointed at their own expense—for the old folk. It was a strange sight to see the boys leap off at highest spring from the summit of the sandcliffs—thirty, forty, and even fifty feet of almost sheer descent—alighting always upon the yielding soil; there was no hurt beyond a sprain or two (with the exception of one boy who came upon his nose, which happened to be a very projecting feature, instead of his legs, and who said he didn't care). It was capital fun, they said, although to us, we confess, it looked much more like determined suicide.

It was a merry, merry day to all at Malden, and surely one of peace if not of quietness. While the soothing strains of the last tune were failing upon the summer air, and mingling musically with the dying peal from out the grey church tower, we took our leave, and rode back through the same soft scenes again. The dewy pastures, dewy fields, the haunts of ancient peace; in the dreamy caw of the rook slow flapping to its lofty nest, in the calm persistence of the cuckoo's farewell note, in the last twitter of the lark as it floated earthward to its grassy home, Peace seemed alike to whisper; in the last good-bye as we turned from the crowded highway into the leafy lane, and in the slumbrous silence of the night as we climbed the hill.

"Familiar in their Mouths as HOUSEHOLD WORDS."—SHAKESPEARE.

HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

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A CRIMINAL TRIAL.

GREAT crimes are commonly produced either out of a cold intensity of selfishness, or out of a hot intensity of passion. It is not difficult for any one to say which must lead to the more detestable results. The visible ferocity, the glare of envy or wild hatred in the criminal who slays his enemy—foul and detestable as it must ever be—is not so loathsome as the tranquil good-humour of the wretch utterly lost in self-content, ready without a particle of malice or compunction to pluck neighbours' lives, as fruit, for his material refreshment. Of course he is the most affable of liars. Never recognising any use for language but the gaining of the low ends of his most base life, he is meanly false with as much natural placidity as belongs usually to the exercise of everyday habits. Such a being would seem kind to those about him; and, indeed, feel kindly as men usually do towards their own possessions. He might be inclined most amiably—after his selfish and proprietorial way—towards his wife whilst he was putting her to a slow and painful death by poison; he might support her head, soothe her, and feel really comfortable afterwards, about her memory. And he would be ready to poison that too, in a pleasant easy way, should chance ever appear to make it worth his while to do so. The unprecedented atrocity of such a man's career, does not expose him to a hasty vengeance. English criminal law displays even more clearly than it enforces, a respect for life. Simply, for instance, because the career of the Poisoner whose trial we recently witnessed (too plainly indicated by the result of inquests upon certain of his victims) was happily without almost precedent among us horrible and revolting, therefore the justice of the nation hedged itself about with an extent of precaution never before known, to ensure for the suspected man a calm and perfect hearing. A case that could have been decided justly in a day at the assizes to which it belonged, and that was open to be proved at once by evidence much more complete and satisfactory than usually is to be had against crimes of the class in question, was, by a special act of parliament, brought for trial to the metropolis, before a jury

of strangers, was argued before the Lord Chief Justice himself, and was protracted so that there should be no shadow of defence left unproduced, and that the accusation might be open to the utmost questioning. Ten days were allowed to be spent in battle against testimony. With unexampled scrupulousness the judge occupied fourteen hours in laying everything that had been said and argued on the case justly and legally before the jury. Never before was a criminal case so argued, or summed up with such masterly elaboration. But the just and perfect statement of it tended—as, being the whole truth, it could only tend—to the complete assurance that the prisoner was guilty. He was declared guilty by the jury of his countrymen; and, in the spirit of that enormous selfishness out of which had come the perpetration of his crimes, the convicted Poisoner then complained, we are told, that he had not had a fair trial.

A fair trial! However great may be the defects of English law, certain it is that we have attained at last to a complete respect for the liberty of the subject, in the administration of justice as regards felonies and capital crimes. There is a great deal to be amended in the dealing with lesser offences at our petty and quarter sessions; but, in our more solemn courts of criminal justice, no honest man's liberty or life is endangered. It was not so in Scotland, neither was it altogether so in England sixty years ago. Tyrannical deeds were done in criminal courts in the years seventeen hundred and ninety-three and four, which prompted the late Lord Cockburn to write an impression, the general acceptance of which is singularly illustrated by one of the events of the day in which his Memorials are published,—namely, "that the existence of circumstances, such as the supposed clearness and greatness of their guilt, tending to prejudice prisoners on their trials, gives them a stronger claim than usual on that sacred judicial mildness, which, far more than any of the law's terrors, procures respect for authority, and without which courts, let them punish as they may, only alienate and provoke."

Since the days when Clothaire found it necessary to decree by special law, that nobody

should be condemned to death without a hearing, slow indeed has been the progress in the direction of that state of perfect fairness towards an accused man, which we have now reached in England. The day is still within the memory of many, when men on trial for their lives were not permitted to defend themselves by counsel, and this deprivation was made in the name of fairness, "because," saith Coke, "that the testimony and proof of the crime ought to be so clear and manifest, that there can be no defence of it." If we travel back still farther, we come to a time when no prisoner was entitled to a copy of the indictment against him, of the panel, or of any of the proceedings; such necessary aids to a defence were refused to Sir Harry Vane and Colonel Sidney. Hearsay evidence; things said to have been said by dead or absent persons; testimonies of the loosest kind, were admitted against a prisoner in the middle of the seventeenth century. It was not usual even to examine witnesses against the Crown. When Thrakmorton on trial for his life asked for the reading of an entire deposition, wherefrom portions had been quoted against him, he was assured that "it would be but loss of time, and would make nothing for him." Then again, persons prosecuted by the Crown, used to be tried by judges holding place and pension at the pleasure of the prosecutor, as well as by juries liable to unlimited fine and imprisonment and, not seldom, reminded that they were so liable for verdicts unpalatable to the Court. Sheriffs, too, were submissive, and commonly returned juries so partial that, as Wolsey said of them, "they would find Abel guilty of the murder of Cain." In the reign of Henry the Eighth, to which we have just referred, seventy-two thousand adjudged criminals were executed, being an average of six a-day, including Sundays. Towards the latter end of the reign of Elizabeth, the average came to be one each day for all the working week, and two for Sunday.

Again, not only were men accused of felonies refused the right to look at the indictments framed against them, but until the twelfth year of the reign of George the Second, the indictments themselves, with the pleas, verdicts, judgments, and so forth, were all uttered in an unknown tongue, and written in a law-hand with ambiguous abbreviations; some of which it was allowable to interpret in more ways than one. And in this language—which was neither Latin, French, nor English, but a compound of all three—in this language rather than in his innocence lay the accused man's best chance of acquittal. If it was said in the indictment of the act of a man who had slain another "murdredavit," instead of "murdravit," or of a felonious act, that it was done "feloniter," when it should have been said "felonice," the indictment was quashed and the criminal set free. In Queen

Elizabeth's time, one John Webster a brutal murderer, was acquitted because the letter *h* was omitted in the Latin word for arm, the indictment had "*sinistro bracio*," instead of "*sinistro brachio*," and another man was liberated because it was judged material that *u* was put instead of *a*, in the Latin for the phrase "otherwise called." It was, "*A. B. alius dictus A. C., butcher*;" when the law ruled it to be essential to write "*A. B. alias dictus A. C. butcher*." These niceties were in the highest degree arbitrary. Gross blunders were sometimes held to be within the bounds of legal language; and whether right or wrong, the terms of the indictment, except for any flaws they might contain, mattered not much to the accused. Until Henry the Fifth's time, so little regard was paid to the liberty of the subject, that it was not even essential that the indictment should contain the Christian and surname with the state and degree of the accused person.

It is curious to note how long and how steady has been the process of reform in the administration of our criminal justice. The spirit of English liberty—the sense of equal rights among all citizens—has, in this one department of the law, prevailed against every unwholesome precedent, and has slowly raised our courts of criminal law to a character of which we have had, in the trial of the Poisoner, certainly a crowning illustration. They are undoubtedly the freest and the fairest courts of justice—we may say it most deliberately—in the world. They fail now only in some accessory matters; but always in the direction of allowing to the criminal too much chance of escape from punishment. Much was wanting of this present perfectness when, in the time of a living generation, men accused of felony had limited rights of defence; very much more was wanting at a period only a little more remote, when the most conspicuous inequality and injustice was an ordinary part of criminal procedure, in the form of the custom called the Benefit of Clergy. Except for a few crimes that were declared not clergyable, men guilty of the greatest outrages against society might be discharged, upon such proof that they were competent for holy orders as was furnished by the reading of a scrap of Latin from the Psalms, called the neck-verse, because it saved men's necks, and beginning, "*Miserere mei, Deus*." Before the eighth year of Elizabeth, the reading of this charm cleared men, not only of the crime in question, but of all crimes previously committed; so that, to many rascals, conviction, with benefit of clergy, was a much better thing than an acquittal. Until the fourth year of William and Mary, little or no benefit of clergy was allowed to women, who were, as to their education, competent to claim it; and, of course, the entire custom told iniquitously on behalf of those whose

crimes merited the most heavy condemnation—men who, as being better taught, should set examples of well-doing to their fellows. Against the poor and ignorant it was so hardly pressed, that it was made an offence in gaolers to teach prisoners to read, as the unknown tongue had it, “*per cause de salvation de leur vie et desturbation de la common ley, en deceit del roy.*”

How well due hearing is secured to every Englishman charged with offence for which he is liable to forfeit life and character, we shall see best by briefly following the course of an English criminal trial. Let us begin with the captured man. Except he be seized in the act of crime, no officer of police or constable can arrest any man in this country without warrant from a magistrate; no magistrate can keep an untried man, after the fashion of despotic countries, rotting in gaol; over the magistrate there hangs the terror of an action for false imprisonment; and, any subject being deprived of liberty may, by a statute passed in the thirty-first year of Charles the Second, upon simple complaint, or upon demand of counsel, have a writ for the bringing of his body (*Habeas Corpus*) within three days before the Court of Queen’s Bench or Common Pleas in order that the high officers of the law may pronounce whether his committal has been just. Sometimes, in case of any prevalent sedition, it has been found desirable that this statute of *Habeas Corpus* should be for a short time suspended; but it is a most essential part of the existing constitution of the country, and one of the surest guarantees of a system of public justice opposite to that now practised in Naples. It is an odd fact that this essential statute owes its place in the history of England to a practical joke. When the vote was taken on it in the House of Lords, Lord Grey and Lord Norris being appointed tellers, “*Lord Norris,*” Burnet relates, “being a man subject to vapours, was not at all times attentive to what was passing; so a very fat lord coming in, Lord Grey counted him for ten, as a jest at first, but seeing that Lord Norris had not observed it, he went on with this misreckoning of ten, and by these means the bill passed; though the majority was indeed on the other side.”

The prisoner, held prisoner under restraints of law that secure him perfectly against tyrannical detention, having been examined before lesser magistrates, is referred—if the case seem to be proved against him and the charge be heavy—for solemn trial at assizes by the Judges of the land. To save the great expense and inconvenience of bringing all criminals for trial to a central court, and at the same time to allow everywhere solemn hearing, judges and barristers travel at fixed and frequent intervals in circuit from town to town. This travelling of justice is a very ancient English custom; but the travelling

judges who used in old time to be called *Justiciarii* in itinere, made their circuit to try causes only once in seven years; and, during the interval, accused men were left wasting in dungeons. Remedy for this came in Edward the First’s time; and, it is from a statute of the thirteenth year of that king’s reign, that the present system of assize and *nisi prius* is derived.

There are now seven circuits in England and Wales, the Midland, Norfolk, Home, Oxford—which is the one that includes Staffordshire—Western, Northern, and Welsh. In each circuit there are certain principal towns appointed assize towns, to which the judges and barristers who take charge of the justice of that particular district repair periodically, pursuant to their commission of oyer and terminer, which is by interpretation to hear and determine causes, and of general gaol delivery, or of liberation of all innocent persons, and sentence upon all guilty persons, lodged in gaol under suspicion of offence.

The judges entering any assize town to fulfil their commission, represent the highest majesty of law, and it is therefore required that the sheriff—the shire-reeve or chief officer of that shire or division of the county—shall advance with javelin-men to meet them, and escort them with all honour to their lodgings. It is also required by ancient custom, that if there be any troops stationed in the town, they march out of it when the judges enter, so showing that the civil power is to be unhindered and supreme.

Upon the opening of the commission, the two judges of circuit take their seats, one in the criminal, the other in the *Nisi Prius* Court. The *Nisi Prius* Court is so called from the form of the writ issued to the sheriff before the arrival of the judges, commanding him to empanel a jury to appear at Westminster, unless before that time (in Latin, *nisi prius*, with which words the writ begins) the Queen’s justices come to the assizes, and require them there. On matters of weight coming before the *nisi prius* court, the judges have power to retain causes to be tried at bar in Westminster. It is of the criminal court only that we here propose to speak; although, between the two, the difference is rather in the matter tried than in the way of trying it.

After formal preliminaries a grand jury is sworn, which may consist of any number of freeholders in good position, but they may be of good position and not freeholders; not less than twelve or more than twenty-three. Properly there should be twenty-three, which ensures that, upon every division of opinion among them, there can be no majority of less than twelve; and twelve of them at least, whatever their number be, must be agreed on any finding they declare. The duty of those gentlemen is to read all the bills of indictment against persons to be tried, and

to throw out those that do not seem to them sufficiently supported by the evidence to call for further hearing. By rejecting an indictment the grand jury may set free a guilty man; but it cannot condemn an innocent one. This is the first chance given to the prisoner, and a palladium of liberty no longer necessary; rather unserviceable, perhaps, than serviceable to the country. The grand jury, having elected its foreman, is sworn: "You, as foreman of the grand inquest of this county, shall diligently inquire and true presentment make, of all such matters and things as shall be given you in charge; the Queen's counsel, your fellows, and your own you shall keep secret. You shall present no one for envy, hatred or malice; or leave any one unpresented for fear, favour, affection or hope of reward; but present all things as they come to your knowledge, according to the best of your understanding. So help you God!" The grand jury having been sworn, the judge makes his charge to them. This consists of general observations on the state of the county and on the calendar, a list of prisoner's names, ages, offences and dates of commitment, with the names of the committing magistrates. After having heard the charge, the grand jury retires into a private room and investigates the evidence on all indictments. The indictments themselves usually are drawn up by the clerk of the peace for the county, with the names of the witnesses for the Crown written on the back of each. If a bill of indictment be ignored by the grand jury, its foreman affixes his signature on the back of it to the words "Not found." If, on the contrary, it be held that the evidence appears sufficient, he signs his name to the three words "A true bill." Upon the faith of which the prisoner will be brought into court and publicly arraigned.

The trial must be public; that is to say, the court must be open to all comers who desire to see that there is justice done. Great is the exigency of space in most of our law courts; but while the form of public hearing is maintained the reality is secured by the admission of reporters and all persons who see for the public and can bear free witness to the nation through the press. In the instance of the prolonged criminal trial recently concluded, a case watched by the public with great interest was removed by the desire of the accused to London from the Staffordshire Assizes, and was tried at the Old Bailey. It was impossible to provide room in the Central Criminal Court—a square half-wainscoted room which, with its single gallery, will hold, including judges, barristers, attorneys, witnesses and jury, not more than about three hundred people. The spirit of our judicial system was obeyed therefore by the sheriffs and under-sheriffs, who have charge of the decent ordering of all criminal trials; and pains were studiously taken to secure every opportunity of watching the proceedings to all persons who went, not

to satisfy their individual curiosity, but as representatives of sections of the public. The ordering of the court in this particular case was as conspicuous an example as the trial itself of the true recognition of the claims made on public justice by a nation strict in the assertion of its liberties.

The prisoner is brought into court, placed face to face with his judge in the presence of his country, and then, his indictment having been read over to him, he is asked formally to hold up his hand and answer to the question, "How say you, guilty or not guilty?" Here again is a form that may wisely be dispensed with. It is a fragment of a form only, the other part of it having already been abandoned. Formerly the catechism began with:

Q. How will you be tried?

A. By God and my country.

Which answer a judicious prisoner once varied by saying, "Not by God, since He knows all; but by your lordship and the jury." The rest of the catechism might also be spared. To expect the prisoner to plead not guilty being guilty, and to say that he does not therein add one more untruth to his offences because it is not falsehood you ask of him but only a legal form, is, in truth, the reverse of a solemn and true opening of a most true and solemn trial. Upon the holding up of the hand, Lord Bacon tells a story of a Welshman who, when the judge told him to hold up his hand, believed that his lordship was about to tell his fortune.

The petit jury—that by which the prisoner is to be tried—is now called in and sworn. Against any man called on this jury the prisoner can object; and, if he pleases, peremptorily, without any assigned reason, and the man objected against is dismissed. Crown counsel has also the power of objecting; but is bound to show a valid reason. The twelve men must be so far responsible members of society as to possess ten pounds a-year in land for life, or twenty pounds on a long lease, or be assessed for rates at thirty pounds in Middlesex, or twenty in another county, the jury—the word jury meaning sworn men—is then sworn in the words following:—"You shall well and truly try, and true deliverance make, between our Sovereign Lady the Queen and the prisoner at the bar, whom you shall have in charge, and a true verdict give according to the evidence. So help you God."

The case is then opened by counsel for the Crown. Briefs for the prosecution are statements of the felony, with their proofs made out from the depositions. Briefs for the defence contain not merely matters of proof, but everything whatever that can be suggested or alleged in the prisoner's favour. The character of the two briefs we have seen illustrated by the arguments of counsel and the witness produced in the case to which we have been now and then referring. On the part of the Crown there was produced a close chain

of the most pertinent testimony. This was urged, and there was urged nothing but this. The case for prosecution was a case of circumstantial evidence, infinitely more convincing than any proof of secret crime from direct testimony. Nobody can be conscious witness to the offence of a poisoner, who does not to a certain extent, by the mere fact of his having witnessed it, lay himself open to suspicion. A man who can stand by and see murder done is capable, perhaps, of bearing false witness; and the oath even of two or three persons whose characters are questionable—all of whom say that they have witnessed actual offence, and all of whom may speak through malice—is less perfect evidence than a long course of testimony from indifferent persons of all ranks and tempers, every point tending to show what the crime was, and by whom and why committed, and the whole forming a mass of absolute proof everywhere uncontradicted. Such proof was furnished against the Poisoner, by the counsel for the Crown, according to their brief. On the other hand, counsel for defence—having no other refuge, and being unable to rebut the damning facts—also in accordance with their brief, and in most strict accordance with the spirit of English justice, exhausted their ingenuity in the production of suggestions, suppositions, and surmises.

To proceed with the story of a trial. Counsel for the Crown having stated, in his opening speech, what he proposes to establish, proceeds to call witnesses for proof of the indictment he prefers. Any one may be a witness who is of sound mind, and knows the responsibility of the position—"knows the meaning of an oath," the form runs; but that is another form on which improvement may be made. The oath taken by the witness is administered in these words: "The evidence you shall give before the court and jury sworn shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. So help you God." Each witness, after he has given his evidence in chief, is tried by the counsel for the prisoner with cross questions, intended to detect and bring out any latent facts that will tell either directly in favour of the prisoner, or indirectly, by shaking the credit of the witness who has testified against him. When in this way the case against the accused man has been closed, his own counsel replies to it, and may reply to it in almost any way. The counsel for the prisoner, in the case to which we now refer, assumed a right to answer altogether as he pleased. Legitimately he may use his ingenuity to give a more favourable interpretation to the evidence he is unable to rebut, may suggest any theory he likes, may make any appeal within certain wide limits of common decorum to the feelings and prejudices of the jurymen. He may use his utmost eloquence in representing perfectly the anxious plea of the prisoner himself for life. He then brings what

evidence he can to rebut the accusation made, or to throw doubt or obscurity about any of the more hopeless features of the case. The credit of his witnesses is of course open to test by cross-examination; only here, as throughout, the business of the prosecution is simply to discover the truth; the business of the defence is personal—to secure, if possible, guilty or not guilty, the prisoner's acquittal. The counsel for the Crown having replied, it is the judge's duty, as a representative of law and justice, to repeat calmly the whole case to the jury, and to point out the relation of each part of it to the law of the land; and, in this form, he leaves the question of the guilt or innocence of the arraigned person to be decided by the panel of his countrymen. During the whole process of each case, the jury, if they need to retire, and as often as they may retire, are given in charge to an officer of the court, who is sworn to keep them in complete seclusion, and to allow them neither food nor fire while they are considering their verdict. This last is another of the forms which seems to be no longer requisite.

All this care having been taken to insure fair and impartial trial, there remains a point of extreme tenderness on behalf of the prisoner—an allowance to him, in fact, of a great chance of escape. The twelve jurymen must be unanimous in declaration of his guilt. The first question asked of them, after they announce that they are ready to respond, is, "Gentlemen of the jury, are you all agreed in your verdict?" If the reply be "We are," the question follows is, "How say you, is the prisoner at the bar guilty or not guilty of the crime charged against him?"—"We say that the prisoner is guilty." The prisoner is then, by a pursuance of the formal dialogue, addressed by the officer of the court, informed of the verdict, and asked what he has to say in bar of sentence. In case of capital offence, if he do not reply, the officer proceeds to cry: "O yes, O yes, O yes!" (the old French for "Hear ye, Hear ye, Hear ye!") "My lords the Queen's justices strictly charge and command all manner of persons to keep silence, while sentence of death is passing on the prisoner at the bar, on pain of imprisonment." The black cap—simply the state cap, a square of black cloth with a pair of lappets—is then put on by the judge or judges, and the sentence is passed in a form of words which need not be repeated.

But there is a chance yet left for the convict, in the discretion given to the government to remit sentences of execution, and called the royal prerogative of mercy. This has not at all times been wisely used; Killebrew came one morning, in a great hurry, to King Charles the Second, who, on seeing him, inquired, "What news?"—"Very bad," he replied. "There is a report about town, that your Majesty robbed

and murdered a man last night in the street." "What mean you?"—"I mean that the man whom your Majesty *would* pardon, against the advice of your best friends, has just committed these acts, and all the world lays the blame of them on your Majesty." "Ods fish," quoth the king, "I am sorry for it; but I will do so no more." Mercy undoubtedly should temper justice; but it is not less necessary to the well-being of society, that in all dealings with crime, justice should not leave mercy to work alone.

CHIP.

RED ROCKETS.

IF we analyse Lloyd's List, we find that out of a gross amount of twelve thousand casualties in four years, upwards of five thousand vessels of all sizes were partially or totally lost; two thousand five hundred and sixty run into port in a sinking state after collision; two thousand three hundred were total wrecks; eight hundred and eighty-three foundered at sea; six hundred and seventy-nine were abandoned after becoming waterlogged, dismasted, or on fire—crews taking to boats; two hundred and four sailed and were never heard of again; eighty-seven were burnt; fifty-one damaged by ice; sixteen destroyed by combustion from coals, flax, wool, and cotton; seven were blown up by coal-dust, four by gas, and one by gunpowder: thirteen were plundered and destroyed by pirates; one struck by a whale and abandoned, and one by a waterspout.

Considered merely as so many hulls of ships damaged and lost, this statement is startling; but if, in addition, we reckon the amount of their cargoes as well as the loss of life, it becomes appalling. What must have been the fate of the thousands of seamen who manned this enormous fleet? We mourned for the fate of Franklin—the President, too. Then, so tenacious is hope, we are now—shall we say expecting to hear of the Pacific, or that magnificent Indianman the Madagascar? These are only a few of our missing ships. Lloyd's List tells us that in four years two hundred and four vessels sailed and were never heard of again—being an average of fifty a year, or about one a week. We are anxious about the Pacific if she is a day overdue. Her money value keeps her before the eyes of the underwriters: she cost one hundred and fifty thousand pounds, to say nothing of her cargo. But the Mayflower, of Lynn, that sailed two years ago last Whit Monday, bound for St. John's, never troubles the public mind, beyond the limits of the little port to which she and her crew belonged. She's only worth five hundred pounds—perhaps not that.

The remembrance of a recent disaster

smarts even now, like a green wound, in the memory of the public. We allude to the total loss of the Josephine Willis. Let us step on board. Here we are, according to the log, passing the South Foreland at ten minutes to eight on the night of the third of February, bound to New Zealand. Clear night; a screw steamer, the Progress, in company, bound to the westward. The captains of the two vessels were school-fellows and friends, and they consorted together until the captain of the screw found that it was his duty to part company with his friend the captain of the Josephine Willis, and proceed on his voyage alone. The separation took place somewhere off Dover.

The Josephine Willis is now off Folkstone, distant about five miles, going seven knots, when a white light is seen ahead. This was the fatal Mangerton steamer, from Limerick to London. Then comes a fearful crash, and all is confusion and horror: the loss of seventy lives takes place in a short hour or so.

It forms no part of our scheme to enter into any inquiry about the backing out of the steamer and keeping aloof from the sinking Josephine Willis; for it appeared that, in the confusion of the moment, it was supposed that the steamer was likely to founder also. During her alarm she fired rockets and burnt a blue light, which fortunately attracted the attention of one of those vigilant sentinels, ever on the watch, the lugger XL. of Deal. This boat arrived in time to rescue seven passengers from the rigging of the top-gallant masts of the Josephine Willis, whose hull by this time was at the bottom of the sea, where we will leave her for the present and go on board the Progress. Here she is, steaming down Channel, only about half a dozen miles off, quite unconscious of what has happened to the poor Josephine Willis. The captain is down in his cabin taking a peep at his chart, when his mate pops his head inside, and reports that a vessel astern is firing rockets.

"Somebody wants a pilot, p'raps, for we are in pilots' water," replied the captain; "or expects a boat from ashore. It's nothing."

More rockets are reported; but as they conveyed no positive intelligence—told no tale—they were unheeded, and the Progress made the best of her way, and thought no more about the signals. However, before clearing the Channel, it was necessary for the screw to put into one of the western ports, and there the first newspaper the captain took in his hands explained the meaning of the rockets; for he learnt then, for the first time, that the Josephine Willis and his old schoolfellow were both at the bottom of the sea.

Now, surely there is room for amendment here. How is it that rockets convey no

specific intelligence? A rocket fired at sea may mean a ship in danger; it may indicate her whereabouts, recall a boat, or dispatch one—or any preconcerted signal. But to one not in the secret, a rocket merely draws attention. Now, suppose the captain of the *Progress* had understood the meaning of the rockets fired by the *Mangerton* steamer, what might have been the result? It is reasonable to suppose that he would have steamed down to her and saved many lives; for it must be remembered that the *Josephine Willis* did not sink until nearly two hours after her collision with the *Mangerton*, and yet she lost seventy lives in consequence of the confusion, or something else, that prevailed on board the steamer. It is not unreasonable to suppose that all hands might have been saved if the captain of the *Progress* had understood the meaning of the rocket-signals, and run down to the assistance of his friend, fresh and undamaged as his vessel was. But no blame can be attached to him; for rockets at present are only fireworks, and convey no positive intelligence.

And is it difficult to remedy this state of things? We think not. Without attempting to arrange a code of night signals, by means of rockets and blue lights, what is to prevent the adoption of a rocket composed of red fire, to be let off only on occasions of imminent danger—such as the collision just quoted—or any other disaster that may occur at sea where instant succour is needed?

It seems reasonable that some simple mode of conveying a positive meaning ought to be adopted by ships when in imminent peril. Rockets are admirable signals when they are understood. Give them a tongue, then; let them be made to speak as plain by night as the *Union Jack*, reversed, does by day. All the maritime world knows what the one means: why should not the other be equally intelligible? Let it be understood that a red rocket or a red fire, to distinguish it from a blue light, meant *DISTRESS*, then such a dreadful calamity as that which befel the *Josephine Willis* would stand a fair chance of receiving assistance in a crowded sea-way, and not, as was the case of that unfortunate vessel, lose seventy lives with a friendly steamer within signal, and only five miles from a shore, too, covered with the handiest and most daring boatmen in the world.

The subject of intelligible signals of distress at night is capable of expansion, and is worthy of consideration. Nor is it beside our purpose, as the greatest maritime nation, to bestow a thought upon it. The twelve thousand casualties reported to Lloyd's is proof that every sort of disaster and horror is continually happening on the high seas, and it is fair to suppose, while rockets, blue lights, and guns, are unintelligible, or may be misunderstood, that in many instances they are fired in vain. There seems

a simple remedy for this: a *RED* rocket, denoting *DISTRESS*—simply *DISTRESS*—that would at least tell its own tale.

THE NINTH OF JUNE.

IN TEN CHAPTERS. CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

THE spongy Scotch mist that dimmed Mr. Nobble's buttons, darkened his blue coat, and made a change of garments so necessary to his companion on the road between Nottingham and Pentridge, soddened the roads and flooded the meadows of the village I have called Crookston Withers; hedges trickled a constant drain into the ditches; cattle, having tried for shelter under trees, returned to the open fields, to escape heavy irregular blobs from the branches; the stuccoed church-tower, patched with rain, cast a sharp reflection on the shining slate roof; the cottage-eaves constantly dripping, dug pebbly gutters before the doors, making the children duck their heads every time they stepped out or stepped in; the grey kitten from the post-office tripped lightly across the road, on the tops of the stones, to visit a relative at Mary Garstang's; and the postman's terrier slunk heavily along, with his tail jammed between his legs, and his spirits too depressed to bark at the broods of dirty and ruffled chickens hopping and pecking in his way, and fluttering noisily out of it. Very few of the human species had that afternoon passed through the village, except the groom from Corner Cottage (who had been met on the grey horse going towards Alfreton), and the post-office runner. The wheels of the Nottingham waggon, which left a couple of running gutters along the whole of its track, were brought to a stand opposite the Bull and Horns, the steaming horses unwilling to give them one other turn. The waggoner's Welsh pony—its head, its tail, and its mane drooping and dripping—stood in the middle of the road immovable and stupid. It did not wag so much as a hair of its ear, even when the waggon-horses, tossing up their nosebags and savagely shaking their necks, jangled their bells with a crash "enough," the ostler remarked, as he wantonly dashed the dregs of a pail of water over the wheeler's legs, "to wake a dead donkey!" The waggoner himself leant listlessly against one of the posts of the inn-porch, staring into the blank and draggled prospect; staring even while he covered his countenance with a mug of ale; staring into the dense mist while asking the ostler if he thought it was ever going to leave off; staring while telling the boy to take the band-box out of the forewain into the post-office, and to be sure and bring back the eightpence.

The boy was leaving the little shop with the money in his hand, when it was knocked out of it by the maid-servant from Corner Cottage, who had rushed across the road—blindly, with her apron thrown over her

head—to know if the “things” had come. The postmistress replied, in her formal manner, that they had come, and that the whole of them would be ready in time to go away to London with the rest of Miss Levine’s luggage on the following morning. Whereupon the damsel disappeared; expressing her delight by slamming the glass door so violently that she knocked from one of the panes the inscription of painted tin which informed the nobility, gentry, and public at large, that Miss Pim made up ladies’ own material on the most reasonable terms.

Having replaced her advertisement as quietly as if the act were a part of her day’s routine, Miss Pim produced from the band-box a little hat, a fold of net, a packet of white Persian, a strip of dove-coloured cloth, and several yards of the finest calico. She then cut out the net for half-a-dozen caps, to draw them up and trim them with some pillow lace; her customer’s own material.

Miss Pim was very thoughtful and very sad. She could not work with her usual diligence; although she was working against time. She sighed much, and tears filled her eyes; so that she was obliged to leave off sewing. Was she committing a sin? Was she wrong in undertaking, upon urgent entreaty, to assist a single young woman whom the world called unfortunate? Could it be a crime to help a victim of misfortune? Yet, when it came to be known that she had thus secretly assisted Miss Levine, would not ladies take away their work from her? Perhaps. She knew Mrs. Calder Dornley would. But right is right; and loss of work she would not repent, if she could only be sure that she *was* right! Then a glance at the great square parlour window of Corner Cottage opposite; and, occasionally, the sight of a pale eager face, with eyes enlarged, darkly bordered, and straining into the misty road whenever the faintest sound of horses’ hoofs could be heard, banished irresolution, and the needle darted more rapidly through the cloth than ever.

“Besides,” continued the conscientious reasoner, “Miss Levine herself, her mother so lately dead, and her father the late rector—wise and pious—never made sin a ground for withholding help.” There was hardly a family in the parish, whatever their creed or condition, who had not to thank them for some benefit; from simple words of comfort and stealthy acts of charity, up to salvation from ruin. When her own mother lay helpless for two years up-stairs, and herself was brought to actual want, either Parson Levine or Mrs. Levine, or Miss Levine, came once a day to the bedside; seldom empty-handed. It was Parson Levine who spoke to the county member to get her to be made postmistress,—and she and all her family dissenters. Then, again, Miss Levine may not have sinned. She may be married, and be bound down to secrecy.

The shadow of the waggon, slowly grinding the road towards Matlock, darkened the window for an instant; and Miss Pim once more ceased working. Her head ached. She was not equal to all the doleful surmises that entered her mind respecting Miss Levine. She was haunted too by the shadow of Mrs. Calder Dornley, that had often clouded her house of late; silently opening her door; sitting down stiffly in her room, and asking spy questions about Corner Cottage: if Miss Pim had noticed anybody go in or come out lately; what letters had arrived, and what letters had been sent away; speaking (even to Miss Pim’s meek apprehension) unimpassioned venom; darting, from her sloe-like eyes, sharp rays of anger, when she mentioned how distinguished families may be disgraced by the vices of low-born girls; always applying her censures to the “young person opposite,” and ending her visits by threatening, in measured sentences, ruin and disgrace to any person living on the Crookston property, who presumed to further or conceal any family ignominy that may be brewing against the Dornleys or Stonards, whether it related to birth or marriage. Yet it was clear that these objections did not proceed from rooted principle; for Mrs. Calder was continually showing kindness to that pert and improper young woman, Mary Garstang, and her ill-starred baby.

The troubled quakeress looked again for relief from her thoughts, towards the broad window of the cottage across the way. The same face presented itself;—the same large eager eyes, straining towards the Nottingham road. Miss Pim knew that Mr. George Dornley was expected back to take Miss Levine with him to London, on his birth-day. This was it;—the ninth of June. She was watching for him, no doubt. But if he should not come?

This brought into her mind that sudden grief, or even joy, sometimes hastens nature, and brings on prematurely such events as that which Miss Levine would certainly be subjected to; and she once more set to work, determined to complete the order in hand before bed-time.

Eusta Levine had been equally busy in the parlour of Corner Cottage. After breakfast she had to pack for the journey to London; but without disturbing those pretty ornaments about her rooms which The Expected loved to see. In the intervals of activity she continued her imaginary journey with him, as long as imagination was under control. It had taken her from Dover to London, from London to Slutbury, and from Slutbury to Nottingham; and now brought her to the very inn in which she had spent, a year before, the one supremely happy day of her existence. She saw him in her mind’s eye mount Black Nan at the inn door to come to her, and felt that only a few diminishing hours divided them.

She watched the clock incessantly, hoping he might intend to surprise her by arriving earlier than he had promised to come; and, knowing every turn of the road, she traced him accurately through each stride of it, to his meeting-place with his groom, and thence to her own door, and into her own arms. Then, Fancy being at fault with Reality, she tried back and went over the ground again; but, when imagination brought him again to the door, and Reality denied his presence, it was not with the full bitterness of disappointment; for, although every faculty of her mind, every fibre of her frame, strained itself towards the one absorbing expectation, desire for his arrival was not unmixed with a wayward dread of its realisation. The ecstasy of the meeting would be insupportable; and, whenever it seemed to be imminent, she felt herself too weak to bear it. Every successive disappointment when she heard, or fancied she heard, a horse approaching, and when the sounds died away, was, therefore, tempered with a sensation of relief.

The acuteness of Eusta's suffering would have been much lessened had there been any one to confide in; any one to speak to. But she was isolated: even those who had come near her seemed to have entered into a league to preserve an ominous reserve, or to torture her with innuendoes.

To banish such recollections, she gave up her imagination once more to picturing the coming meeting. She went on acting over again the minutest incident. She imagined George Dornley gaining the top of the hill; she heard him cantering down towards her, on the brave old grey. She was at the door to receive him; she was in his strong embrace; she felt, upon her cheek, the breath of his deep noble voice softened to murmurs of passionate tenderness and love. . . . Her head swam—she was fainting.

Dr. Bole, knowing better than any one how very critical her condition was at this time, would, had he been present, have reckoned the noiseless entrance of Mrs. Calder Dornley into the room (which happened at that moment) a very fortunate intrusion. That lady, having been set down from the carriage by her husband at the church, had walked across the churchyard, had entered the cottage, and deposited her wet bonnet and cloak in the passage, unheard and unobserved. She appeared—her countenance as frigid and dry, and her short thick curls as crisp, as if she had stepped out of the frost—exactly in time to change the current of Eusta's blood and to preserve her from fainting. Eusta experienced so complete a reaction, on seeing Mrs. Calder Dornley, that she soon recovered sufficient composure to speak. It was her nature to be timid; but now, hope so near realisation, gave her courage and strength, beset and helpless as she was. She

ventured to say that her visitor's presence was, at that time, very undesirable.

Mrs. Calder Dornley established herself on the hardest and straightest chair, and deliberately produced from her pocket some muslin-work with a stiff geometrical pattern—a proceeding which denoted that the stay would not be short. "This is a visit of duty," she said, "and I have arranged with my husband to remain here until he fetches me on his return in the carriage from Matlock. However disagreeable to you and to me, Miss Levine, I must perform the duty which is imposed upon me."

"By whom?" Eusta innocently asked.

"By my husband and my own conscience," was the answer. "There is no time to be lost; for we half expect my brother-in-law to arrive to-day, this being his birthday; when he arranged to come home, and——"

"Half expect?" Eusta interrupted, dreading that news implying delay had transpired. "Are you not sure he will come?"

Mrs. Calder Dornley was always so indisputably right in her statements and surmises that she never noticed interruptions. "And," she went on, with the same breath she had begun with, "as my husband thinks it imperative that I should ascertain certain facts from you, which are important to our family to be known, I am here to ascertain them." She then pointed out, in the clearest and most convincing manner, the county, the national importance of the Crookston property and the Crookston lineage; contrasting it with the meanness of Miss Levine's own origin; for, although her late mother was the daughter of a bishop, that bishop's father had been a brewer, and Miss Levine's paternal grandfather was a very small farmer. Any thought of an alliance between two such families, therefore, would excite a fever of indignation from one end of the county to the other; putting any additionally discreditable circumstances out of the question.

It was Mrs. Dornley's habit not to look people in the face while speaking to them; least of all, persons she disliked. She did not, therefore, notice that Eusta—tortured by the doubts dropped into her mind one minute, and the next persuading herself that George was galloping towards her only a few miles off—paid no attention to what was said. Restless and impatient, she could not remain upon the sofa, and moved about the room, distraught, but silent.

The persecutor bore this silence very stoically. Never ceasing to draw out her needle and thread with vicious regularity—never once looking up; patiently waiting until Eusta returned to the sofa.

And when Eusta seated herself, Mrs. Calder said in hard cold accents, "I really must obtain some satisfactory explanation for my husband. It is now nine o'clock, and he agreed to be here at a quarter past nine. Before he comes, and before his

brother returns (if he do return), I must know whether you are married or whether you are not married; the more so as, in two months at latest I judge, you will be a mother." She had never before spoken so plainly, and her words gradually recalled Eusta's attention.

Eusta tried to speak, but her words swelled her throat, and she could not. She looked imploringly towards her questioner and sobbed. Without avail; for Mrs. Calder did not move her eyes from her work, and showed no sort of impatience to hear the required confession. She preferred the sound of the sobs; and, when these grew louder and stronger, she expressed a hope that Miss Levine would not, like most vulgar young women, seek shelter from discussion in hysterics. Poor Eusta! it was her struggle to speak that made hysterics so imminent. But the recollection that her husband's interests and wishes were at stake restored her, and she said, in half-choked accents:

"I have told you frequently that my word and honour are pledged not to reveal to anyone, the nature of my engagement with Mr. George Dornley. O, do have pity on me! Do not seek to make me break my word! Do not tempt me! I have borne your scorn and your husband's anger. I have heard you accuse him, whom I love better than life, of being a libertine and a traitor. This has been going on for months, and will you not wait an hour longer? Will you not wait until Mr. Dornley comes to answer for me and for himself?"

"It is not certain that he will come. My expectation is that he will be prevented from coming. The government——"

"I am assure he will come as that there is a Providence now watching over me!" Eusta exclaimed, fervently. "He *must* come. What do I live for, but for him to come?" She said this almost fiercely.

"The government," Mrs. Calder continued placidly, "may find occasion to enforce his presence elsewhere; in some secure place where the seditious practices he was guilty of before he went abroad, cannot be repeated."

"But he will come: here: to me. Stone walls will not keep him from me: hosts of enemies will not keep him from me. I feel it to be as impossible for him not to come, as it will be impossible for me to live, if he does not come."

"In either case," said Mrs. Calder, making an eyet-hole, "my question must be answered. You need not hesitate; for, whether you are married or whether not, your lot in life will be wretched enough. If you are not a wife, you will have to endure the disgust which all right-minded persons——" She did not finish the sentence; but complained that it was too dark to work. "If you are married," she continued, letting her hands fall into her lap, "your child will be a beggar; born, without inheritance."

Eusta's mind had again shut out every-

thing except the devouring desire for George Dornley's approach. She was once more studying the clock, and computing time against distance; reckoning that, at about this moment he ought to be certainly within hearing; for the appointed time had nearly arrived. The servant, who had entered with lights, aroused her, by attempting to close the shutters. "They must not be shut!" Eusta hastily said. "They would deaden the sounds from the road."

When the girl had left the room, Mrs. Calder resumed her sewing, "Dr. Bole," she said, "and Mr. Bearshaw, the family lawyer, have both pronounced old Mr. Dornley so much better since his sojourn at Bath, that he will soon be capable of transacting business; and, should his eldest son have married a person without family or fortune, the first use of his recovery will be to cut off the entail of the Crookston estates." Mrs. Calder stopped to watch the effect of this announcement, and looked up. She found Eusta panting with expectation; her ear close to the window; every faculty absorbed in listening. Perceiving that all that had been said went for nothing, the rigid moralist felt it to be her duty to put the case somewhat stronger. "I was saying, Miss Levine, that positive beggary——"

"Hush!" exclaimed Eusta, raising her finger. "I hear a tramp;" she paused, "Yes, it is the tramp of a horse." She listened again, her face flushed, the veins starting out from her forehead.

"I really must claim your attention," Mrs. Calder persevered, "to the disreputable——"

"No," Eusta said, sinking into a chair. "There are two horses. It cannot be he!" Then, willing to mitigate one agony by courting another, she agreed to attend to her lecturer.

Mrs. Calder described, in a few more acrid words, the probable destitution that awaited George Dornley; and Eusta, never having before contemplated the possibility of her husband's ruin, and attributing it if it happened, to herself, felt her head burn and her eyes swim; but was relieved by tears. Her companion went on sawing the air with her needle and thread, as mechanically and regularly as the clock ticked. The Crookston carriage was now heard driving towards the door, and Eusta, dreading the entrance of Calder Dornley, determined to make a last appeal to his wife.

"You hate me, I know," she said, looking at her through her tears. "You hate him—George—the more that you once loved him." Mrs. Calder bit her thin lip and her thread, hitherto pulled out firm and straight, trembled in the air; "but, as one woman appealing to another, I implore you to have some tenderness for me. I have no thought of unkindness towards you. I could be as a sister to you. Utterly bereft and alone, I have yearned for sisterly sympathy, and compassion. I have

not one friend in the world, except him whose love for me is, you say, to be his destruction. Give me but one kind word," she sobbed piteously. "Give me such a look as you would throw upon a dying beggar." She drew herself nearer. "If," she continued, passionately, "you hate me because I have kept my secret from you, if breaking my solemn pledge, will save him from ruin——"

"Well," said the sister-in-law, looking down grimly but eagerly upon the suppliant.

Eusta threw herself at Mrs. Calder's feet :

"I confess. We *are* married."

Mrs. Calder thrust herself suddenly back, as if Eusta had stung her. Married! The coming child legitimate, and herself childless! Even if George Dornley do not forfeit his inheritance by sedition and treason, the estates will still revert to his lawful heirs, and pass away from her husband! O, that old Mr. Dornley were in a condition to cut off the entail!

Eusta was not conscious of being so hatefully spurned as she really was; for her attention was acutely averted. Mr. Calder's carriage had stopped and its occupant had alighted: but there came a new sound from the road and Eusta started to her feet and exclaimed,

"I hear him!

She flew to the window and looked, wildly but vainly, through it into the thick small rain.

"It is Black Nan," she said, listening intently. "I know the sound of her canter as well as I know *his* footfall."

She paused and reflected.

"Yes, George has missed the groom and has ridden the poor staunch creature all the way. That is why he is so late. At last! at last!"

She fixed her eyes on Mrs. Calder when a horse rattled past the window and suddenly stopped:

"You hear? He is at the door. He dismounts! George, George, come to me!"

She threw up her arms ready for George Dornley to fall into them. Thomas Hockle presented himself.

A shrill unearthly laugh pierced the gloom in the road, shot through the village, frightened the three horses standing at the cottage door, and made them so restive that the grooms could scarcely hold them. Miss Pim, stamping letters for the night post, drew aside her curtains, looked through her own windows into the window of Corner Cottage, and observed some one supporting a lifeless woman towards a sofa, and another woman hastily closing the shutters. Perceiving a carriage and pair, and a saddle-horse at the door, she thought Mr. George Dornley had arrived, and ejaculated as she returned to her duty: "Poor thing! Joy has overpowered her."

In the postmistress's excitement, her hand strayed from the letters to one of the little night-gowns which lay folded beside them and she stamped upon it the words, "Crookston Withers, June nine," with, to her extreme mortification, indelible ink.

There was a hurried but subdued talking in the road close to the door.

It was the voice of Mrs. Calder speaking to her husband, "Yes, that must be done—at once."

Miss Levine's servant burst into the post office, breathlessly demanding, "The things!" and Miss Pim, anticipating why they were wanted, did not ask a single question; but quietly packed them so that the rain should not damp them in their short transit.

The servant had not departed two minutes before she again appeared. "Missus is very ill," she said, "and they have sent Tom Hockle (who has only just come back from Alfreton) upon Black Nan, off to Matlock on some errand or another; though the mare's so tired he thinks he'll never get there. They say that I am in the way, and they have turned me out too. I'm to sleep with mother to-night. They're opening the boxes Missus had packed up to take to London with her, and they've ordered the carriage not to stir from the door, if it waits there all night. For my part I'm amost mazed with it all; but I must be off to fetch Molly Garstang."

When Miss Pim went outside to shut her shutters, previous to going to bed (her hour was ten o'clock) she saw the nurse hurrying towards Corner Cottage.

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

ALTHOUGH the dawn which rose when the ninth of June had died away, began to brighten the brow of Linney Hill, and the first beams of the morning sun faintly glistened upon the mountings of a carriage rolling rapidly over it from Corner Cottage towards Matlock; yet Arch Lane, with its overhanging trees, continued as dark and silent as a cavern. The birds fluttered round the outer branches without uttering a note, and there was not a breath of air to rustle a leaf. But the silence was harshly broken when a tall man—his dress torn, and his Hessian-boots muddy to the tassels—entered the lane to make his way towards Crookston. He had not penetrated far into the lane when he distinguished a whispering amongst some persons concealed in the hedge; then came a clattering of sabres and a cocking of carbines; then a rush; then a fierce struggle between him and a couple of dismounted hussars. There was [so little light that had not a corporal-major, looking grimly on, guarding another prisoner—a portly person in a blue coat—called out to the combatants to stand clear, they would have been ridden over by the carriage as it came dashing through the dark and rugged avenue. It was obliged to stop. A window was let down; a man thrust out his head, and ordered the postilion to go on for his life; or, if he didn't (an oath darted out between the teeth like a bullet) he would shoot him!

The prisoner—who had not noticed this,

being busy felling his fellow captive (who had betrayed him) to the earth—had been secured, and dragged to the gate to which the troop horses were tied. The road being clear, the carriage dashed onward; and, one glance towards the gate as they passed, showed to two of its occupants—Mr. and Mrs. Calder Dornley—who the newly-taken prisoner was. A short sharp glance passed between the husband and wife. Mrs. Dornley would have spoken but for an interruption which came from the opposite seat—the cry of a newly-born infant lying in Mary Garstang's lap.

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

THE good town of Nottingham, not having the remotest suspicion that a besieging force was in motion to sack it, slept soundly on the night of the ninth of June. But, towards the morning of the tenth, it woke in a fright. Very early, its great triangular market-place resounded with the tramp of infantry, the grounding of muskets, and the clattering of cavalry hoofs. The mayor and municipal officers were knocked untimely out of their beds, and appeared in the town-hall with their robes of office awry, and their countenances bewildered and dazed. As the morning advanced, fasting county magistrates galloped in from their distant homes, and made straight for the Royal George; where, in petty sessions assembled, they communicated with the barracks, by means of special constables and orderlies, between hastily-snatched cups of tea and half-eaten eggs. Expresses were sent off for the high-sheriff and deputy-lieutenant, and Mr. Vollum, the chief legal functionary of the town (of the firm of Vollum and Knoll), sent his partner post to London to confer with the solicitor of his majesty's treasury. The tradespeople under the arcades, would not open their shops; but wandered between the Royal George, the town-hall, and the newspaper offices, asking what was the matter, and getting for answer wild and alarming information. The panic was not allayed by the frequent arrival of prisoners, guarded by constables, or escorted by hussars, on the tops of through-coaches, or in the bottoms of farmers' carts.

By noon the prevalent horrors had evaporated sufficiently to leave a residuum of truth; and this was published in a supplement of the local journal. The Pentridge rioters had attacked the Butterley iron-works without success, but had proceeded to rifle the cottages along the road of guns and ammunition, and to pull unwilling men out of their beds to join in the intended capture of Nottingham, on pain of being pistolled. One man at Topham's Close farm, who did not lace his boots quite quickly enough to please the Nottingham Captain, was shot dead on the spot. The rioters actually advanced as far as Eastwood, about six miles from the town; but were met there by a county gentleman who was riding home from a late sitting of

the House of Lords—a club of that distinguished name which was held at the Green Boar; and he cantered back to mention the circumstance to the officer on duty at the cavalry barracks. Eighteen troopers, who happened to have been kept under arms all night, were instantly led, by a captain and a cornet, to the scene of action; and, in five minutes, they captured forty stand of arms and several prisoners. A detachment of troopers at Matlock also had got the alarm; had scoured that part of the country, arresting several of the rioters who had not stolen or straggled away during the march.

This was the true account. But the true account did not suit the views either of the Imperial Government or of the London newspapers in Government pay. When their description came out, it was the description of a wide-spread rebellion. It was produced piecemeal, in first, second, third, fourth, and fifth editions, all bristling with prodigious notes of admiration, and headed with appalling capitals.

Towards evening, the bewitching curls of the engaging little barmaid at the Royal George again shook like hanging fruit; but, this time, with grief. Her friend the Young Squire had been marched up-stairs by a guard of hussars, handcuffed to the "party" who had got away a letter yesterday morning, in the name of Nobble.

Mrs. Tuckey the landlady was hardly less affected than her daughter, and had her reasons for entreating Mr. Vollum, to look over his papers in the bar-parlour. The prisoners had just been searched, and the Bench had ordered their clerk to retire, for the purpose of perusing in calm privacy the documents found upon their persons, and then to discharge himself in open Court of all the treason he could pick out.

The hostess was determined that Mr. Vollum—a rival of Mr. Flip—should have his task made as pleasant to him as possible; and, knowing that he had had no dinner, sat him down at a table near an open window behind the screen, to a delicious anchovy toast, and a tumbler of diluted sherry sprinkled with a generous surface of nutmeg,—a cool drink which was, next to the landlady herself, Mr. Vollum's special weakness.

The personal effects found on Mr. Nobble were few; and, denoted a leaning, more to order's, than to treason's side. They consisted of six one pound notes, a short letter, and a pic-nic knife. This knife, besides being a horse-pick, a toothpick, a gimlet, a corkscrew, a punch, a tweezer, a file, a wrench, and a screw-driver, was knobbed at the end with a silver crown, which made it also a clandestine constable's staff. The letter ran thus:—

"I now learn that he intends to ride across country from Shutbury to Nottingham; where he may arrive on Monday afternoon. He is certain to step at the

Royal George. He is easily wrought upon, and something must be done to induce him to push on at once to the Pentridge meeting, on pretence that his influence alone can turn the Nottingham Captain and his crew from their fanatical purpose. The meeting is sure to be a seditious one; and if we can fix him with taking *any* part in it, we are safe. His intention is to come straight home from the Royal George, where this awaits you. He must *not* come home."

This epistle had no signature, and was addressed to Mr. Nolliver, under cover to K. N. Noble, Esq., Royal George, Nottingham, to be left till called for. "The only suspicious circumstance against the man," said Mr. Vollum, "is this going about with an alias." The letter bore the Crookston Withers post-mark.

And, to Mr. Vollum's astonishment, so did all the letters found on the other prisoner; except one, and this had no post-mark. It purported to be written by a political friend of Lord Wordley, but the writing was very like that of the prisoner, Noble. It intreated the recipient to go to Pentridge, and use all his eloquence and influence to turn aside the assembly to abandon its mad and hopeless purpose. All the other letters were deeply black-bordered and were from the same writer—a lady. Although Mr. Vollum, divined at a glance the tender nature of this correspondence, he sorted it according to dates, and went through it as minutely as I had done, and as methodically as if it had consisted of indictments or leases. When he had finished this part of his task, Mr. Vollum observed, speaking to himself (a habit he had), "No treason here, worse than domestic treason. Well, when one brother does hate another, the case—especially if the hate of a soured woman is thrown into bargain—always turns out to be a case of Cain and Abel."

He had been occupied in his scrutiny for nearly half an hour, when, overhead—where all had hitherto been deadly quiet—there was a sudden moving of chairs, and scuffling of feet. The court was being broken up abruptly. A constable (Mr. Frontis, in fact, the ladies' hair-dresser) ran down-stairs, rang the ostler's bell, and ordered, in the highest pitch of his treble voice, "A po-shay and pair immejently!" He then satisfied the curiosity that bloomed in the landlady's face, by squeaking, "Why, mem, we're in the wrong county. The prisoners is remanded to Derby."

GOLD IN GREAT BRITAIN.

"Cursed be the gold and silver which persuade
Weak men to follow far fatiguing trade!
The lily—Peace—outshines the silver store,
And life is dearer than the golden ore."

The camel-driver of the poet may be regarded as a type of those who, yielding to the promptings of avarice, forsake the plodding paths of honest and humble industry,

and commit themselves to the delusive streams which "flow o'er golden sands." The history of gold-seeking has, through all ages, developed the worst features of humanity. Depravity, crime, and misery are the invariable attendants—the presiding fates—of the gold-fields. The wretched character of the earliest gold-seekers of the Bactrian steppes appears in that strange story which Herodotus tells: "It is affirmed, that the Arimaspi—a people who have but one eye—take the gold away by violence from the griffins." So wretched was the character of the gold-seeker in the eyes of Pliny, that he thus commences his chapter on gold: "Oh! that the use of gold were clean gone. Would God it could possibly be quite abolished among men, setting them, as it doth, into such a cursed and excessive thirst after it."

As it was in the days of antiquity, so was it in the middle ages, and so it is in the present day. The gold-miner of Scythia—of Spanish America—of California and Australia, have differed but little in character. A depraved population distinguishes alike the auriferous regions of the Old and of the New World. Thus, too, deception, dishonesty, and crime mark the story of the search for gold in England.

We are told in the Triads, that the Welsh princes rode in golden cars. Cæsar informs us that he was induced to invade Britain by the representations which had been made of its mineral treasures. Certain it is that the Romans mined for gold in Wales; at Ogofau, in Carmarthenshire, are well-defined evidences of their search, and from the remains of workshops, and the discovery of golden ornaments, it would appear that search must have been to some extent successful. A strange tradition is connected with the old British king Cymbeline. "Cymboline, prince of the Trinobantes, which included Essex, is stated to have coined gold money instead of rings." Then the writer, Sir John Pettus, in his strange but instructive *Fodina Regales*, says, "This was probably the mine afterwards discovered in the time of Henry the Fourth." No such mine was ever found, but Henry the Fourth, by his letters mandamus, commands Walter Fitz Walter—"upon information of a concealed mine of gold in Essex—to apprehend all such persons as he in his judgment thinks fit, that do conceal the said mine, and to bring them before the king and his council, there to receive what shall be thought fit to be ordered."

From the reign of Henry the Third we find numerous grants of all mines of gold, and silver, in certain counties of England, Scotland, and the English pale of Ireland. Edward the Third and Henry the Sixth appear to have been especially desirous of developing the auriferous treasures of their country, judging from the numerous grants made by them. Shropshire, Cornwall, Devon-

shire, Gloucester, Somerset, Northumberland, and Westmorland, are the counties included, and more especially mentioned in these grants; but we have not any evidence that a single gold-mine was ever discovered by the eager seekers, or contributed the desired royalty to the anxious monarchs.

The Black Prince certainly removed several hundred miners from Derbyshire to Devonshire, and from the mines about Combartin, it is said that he obtained wealth sufficient to pay the expenses of his wars in France; but there is no evidence that this wealth was in gold. The lead-ores of this part of Devonshire were, and are, exceedingly rich in silver; and the treasure obtained by Edward's miners was probably in that metal. We have distinct evidence of the discovery of silver, lead, copper, and tin, in numerous law-suits between the adventurers, and in the claims made by the crown for unpaid royalties; but there is no mention of the actual discovery of gold. We know a district in Devonshire bearing the name of Gold Street, which was, in the days of Elizabeth, zealously worked over, as the numerous existing shafts show; but all these shafts are on a load of argenteiferous silver.

"The Discoverie and Historie of the Gold-mynes in Scotland" is the title of a book published by the Bannatyne Club, from a manuscript written by Stephen Atkinson in sixteen hundred and nineteen. This Atkinson was a *finer* in the Tower of London about the year fifteen hundred and eighty-six. In sixteen hundred and sixteen Atkinson obtained leave to search for gold and silver in Crawford Moor on paying the king one tenth of the metals found. This gold-seeker was evidently not successful, and the object of his treatise was to induce James to embark in gold-mining. Atkinson compares King James to Job, David, and Solomon—and argues that he may build a second temple more glorious than the first, if he will but fairly explore the gold, silver, and lead-mines, in Crawford, or Friar's Moor, and Glengonnar. The king does not appear to have yielded to the persuasions of the enthusiast; but in sixteen hundred and twenty-one, he granted a lease for twenty-one years to John Hendlie, physician, of the *gold mynes* in the districts of Lead Hills and Wanlock Head, which "has been thir divers yeiris bygane neglectit." Laing, in his History of Scotland, informs us that King James expended three thousand pounds on the gold-mines of Crawford Moor, and obtained not quite three ounces of gold. Beyond this we cannot learn that either Atkinson or Sir Bevis Bulmer, and others who were adventurers in these gold-schemes, ever made any satisfactory discovery. Pennant indeed says, "In the reigns of James the Fourth and James the Fifth of Scotland, vast wealth was procured in the Lead Hills, from gold found in the sands washed from the mountains; in

the reign of the latter, not less than to the value of three hundred thousand pounds sterling." We cannot discover the slightest authority, which could have warranted Pennant in making this bold assertion. Gold has been found in the Lead Hills, and other parts Scotland: occasionally good-sized nuggets have been discovered—one is said to have weighed thirty ounces,—but, on several occasions, the gold fever has set in upon the people, and large expenditures of money have had no other reward than the ruin and disappointment of enthusiastic hopes.

Yet more recently we have examples of a like character. In seventeen hundred and ninety-five, it transpired that lumps of gold had been picked up in a valley on the flank of the mountain called Croghan Kinshela, in the southern part of the county of Wicklow. Crowds of the Irish peasantry were soon employed upon the banks of the stream in which the gold had been found—and some appear to have made a productive harvest. The government then obtained a special act of parliament, and a systematic course of streaming for gold was instituted under the direction of three commissioners, Messrs. Mills, King, and Weaver. Up to the breaking out of the rebellion, in May, seventeen hundred and ninety-eight, these gold works were remunerative; but, during that unfortunate period the works were abandoned, and they remained idle until eighteen hundred and one, when washings again commenced. These were persevered in for some years, and nine hundred and forty-four ounces of gold were obtained; the ingots of which were from twenty-one and three-eighths to twenty-one and seven-eighths carats fine, the alloy being silver—and the total value at the time three thousand six hundred and seventy-five pounds. This, however, was obtained at a cost exceeding fifteen thousand pounds, and the government was advised to abandon the undertaking. The gold was disseminated throughout an irregular bed composed of clay, sand, and fragments of rock more or less rounded; the particles were generally minute scales, but large solid lumps were found from time to time, the heaviest of which weighed twenty-two ounces.

Within the last few years, we have been told that "Pactolean streams flow through the beautiful valleys of Devonshire." The Britannia and Poltimore mines were set to work upon the strength of the discovery of some small pieces of gold in the waste heaps of some old mine workings. The search for gold in Devonshire appears to have been zealously made,—and the result is, that the search is abandoned.

The gold-bearing district of Merionethshire, in North Wales, has been the most recent of the auriferous discoveries; and the curious quartz lodes near Dolgelly still attract attention. In eighteen hundred and thirty-six, gold was detected in one of these

quartz lodes by Mr. O'Neil. It does not appear to have been worked until, in eighteen hundred and forty-three, Mr. Arthur Dean discovered gold at Cwm Eisen, an account of which he gave to the British Association. In this communication Mr. Dean stated, "that a complete system of auriferous veins exists throughout the whole of the Snowdonian, or Lower Silurian formations of North Wales." The gold was found either in veins of quartz, or disseminated through lead-lodes. Mr. Dean's statement is as follows:—"Some of the gold ores produce from three pennyweights to sixty ounces of gold per ton of ore as broken, and some of the washed sulphurets of lead contain lead, seventy-five per cent.; silver, forty ounces; gold, from two to twenty ounces per ton."

Judging from examples which we have seen, we have no doubt that Mr. Arthur Dean made a correct statement; but it applies only to small sections of either the quartz or the lead-lodes. Cwm Eisen mine has been several times worked and abandoned; up to the present time no profit has been realised. Professor Ramsay, in a paper read before the Geological Society (eighteen hundred and fifty-four), says, "From that date" (eighteen hundred and forty-four) "to this time no one has attempted to work any mines in North Wales for gold, except that at Cwm Eisen; nor have I ever met with any miner who has seen any gold of the alleged auriferous veins, with many of which I am well acquainted." Professor Ramsay, in continuation, says, in speaking of the gold mine at Dol-y-frwynog, "On examining a heap of quartz which lay at the mouth of the shaft, and turning over a few pieces, I readily saw, with the naked eye, gold in small flakes and grains, irregularly disseminated through the quartz. In a more select heap of quartz, on all the pieces it was distinctly visible to the unassisted eye; and one mass in particular, heavier than a strong man could lift, was literally spangled all across its surfaces with glittering gold." We desire to state this matter fairly and fully,—gold has been detected in the matrix of the copper-bearing lodes a mile to the south of Dol-y-frwynog; discoveries of gold have been made at Clogau on the hills north of the Dolgelly and Barmouth road, and at Penmaen. The existence of gold in North Wales is undoubted, but it is extremely diffused where it does occur, and its occurrence is very irregular. Within the last two or three years several individuals, and companies, have sought to develop the auriferous treasures of these English gold rocks. Thousands have been expended; the best appliances of modern mechanics and chemistry adopted; yet the gold discovered has not been sufficient to pay working expenses. In truth, there are few metals more widely spread over the earth's surface than gold, but it is only in a few isolated spots

that the precious metal is accumulated in such quantities as to render the search for it at all remunerative.

NAVVIERS AS THEY USED TO BE.

In the year one thousand eight hundred and thirty-four, having completed my education at an academy near Harrow, wherein I had spent six years of the sixteen to which I had attained, I returned to my native village, and declared my wish to be an engineer. We lived in a remote corner of the county of Hertford. Everywhere railways were almost untried innovations, therefore, my worthy guardian, when I told him that I meant to be an engineer, said that he pitied me from his heart, and begged that I would banish the thought instantly.

I did not heed his counsel. In the autumn previous to my leaving the school, situated, as I said, near Harrow, the works of the London and Birmingham Railway had been commenced close to its academic groves. Opportunity had thus directed my attention towards engineering works. Even a little knowledge was thus gained which had become the stimulus to further acquisitions; so that I bought for myself Grier's Mechanics' Calculator, and Jones on Levelling, studied them in leisure hours, made fresh observations as to the progress of the works whenever I could manage to climb over the playground wall; and when I returned home, had got so far that I could keep a field-book, reduce levels, compute gradients, and calculate earthworks with tolerable accuracy. I left school resolved to be an engineer.

My guardian was equally resolved that I should not have my own way in the matter; so I rose early one morning in the month of March, eighteen hundred and thirty-five, packed up a change of linen and an extra pair of trousers, with my Grier in a handkerchief, and with but a few shillings in my pocket, set off for the nearest railway works. There I hoped to obtain employment, and, by beginning at the beginning, to follow upon their own road the Smeatons, Stevensons, and Brunels. I tramped, therefore, to Boxmoor; and reaching the unfinished embankment at that place, after a walk of some thirty miles, footsore and weary, I went boldly upon the ground and asked for work. I don't know what the men—the gaffers, as they were called, thought of me. One told me that, "I looked too much like a hap'orth of soap after a hard day's wash to be fit for much;" another asked me whether I had made up my mind not to scratch an old head; but at last my perseverance in application was rewarded with a driver's job, at twelve shillings a-week wages. I was to drive a horse and truck full of earth along the temporary rails of the embankment to the end of it, where the truck was tipped, and

its contents shot out to serve towards the further extension of the bank.

I was a driver for more than a fortnight, during which time my clothes were torn to ribbons. In the course of my third week I did that which I had seen other unfortunates do,—I drove horse and truck together with the earth, over the tip-head.

Forfeiting my wages and my situation, I trudged to Watford tunnel, which I reached on the same evening; and, next morning at day-break I was descending one of the great shafts, a candidate for subterranean labour. I rose in the world afterwards; but my rise dates from this descent.

The man to whom I had engaged myself was a sub contractor of the fourth degree—Frazer, by name, a thorough Yorkshireman—who never spoke without an oath, was never heard even to call man, woman, or child by Christian name; whose only varieties of expression were that when he was in a bad humour he swore at others, when in a good humour he cursed himself. My job under this man, was bucket-steering. Placed upon the projecting ledge of a scaffold some eighty feet above the level of the rails in the tunnel, and one or two hundred feet below the surface of the earth, while bricklayers, masons, and labourers were busy upon the brickwork of the shaft above, below and round me, while torches and huge fires in cressets were blazing everywhere. I was, in the midst of the din and smoke, to steer clear of the scaffold the descending earth-buckets one of which dropped under my notice every three minutes at the least. This duty demanding vigilant attention, I had to perform for an unbroken shift (as it was termed) of six hours at a stretch.

“Look thou,” said Frazer with an oath, when giving me instructions, “you just do like this.” I was to clasp a pole with my left arm, hang over the abyss, and steady the buckets with a stick held out in my right hand. “Do like this,” he repeated, swearing, “but mind, if you fall, go clean down without doing any mischief. Last night I’d to pay for a new trowel that the little fool who was killed yesterday knocked out of a fellow’s hand.” The little fool was the poor lad whom I replaced, and as I afterwards learned, was a runaway watchmaker’s apprentice out of Coventry, who had been worked for three successive shifts without relief, and who had fallen down the shaft from sheer exhaustion. And, before I knocked off my first shift, I was not surprised at his fate. I was so thoroughly exhausted that Frazer put me into the bucket, and gave orders to a man to bear a hand with me to Sanders’s fuddling crib, and let me have a pitch in for an hour, and a pint.

Sanders’s fuddling crib was a double hovel, situated nearly at the foot of the shaft. The “pitch in” with which I was to be indulged was a lie-down on a mattress, of which there

were several; nearly all of them occupied by men and boys more or less exhausted. I slept for six hours, and awoke refreshed; but, no sooner was it discovered that I was awake, than I was told to “scuttle out,” which I did quickly, and my bed was instantly filled by another over-wearied worker. “Now get your pint,” said the old wooden-legged man who had charge of this sleeping accommodation. I was ushered into the other section of the hovel in which there were some thirty men drinking, smoking and swearing in true navigator style, before a bar established for the sale of beer. I did not get my pint, for I eschewed beer; but bargained it away with a man for a drink of coffee from his bottle. It was strong and warm, for the bottle had been standing on the hot stone hearth; the very smell of the coffee was inspiriting, and I was on the point of putting the bottle to my lips when it was dashed from my hands by a huge fellow, who rushed past us to the fire, exclaiming,

“Hist! hist! Red Whipper’s a gwain to fight the devil!”

I looked round. Seated on one of the benches about half-way down the hut was a man who had fallen asleep over his beer. He wore a loose red serge frock and red night-cap, the peak of which appeared through a newspaper which had been thrust over his head, and hung down to his knees. A momentary hush prevailed; when the man who had knocked down my coffee, returning with a light, set fire to the paper. Red Whipper was instantly enveloped in flame, and started from his sleep in fierce alarm, throwing his arms about him like a madman. This joke was called fighting the devil. It led to a general scuffle, in the midst of which I made my escape into the wilder; though more reasonable, turmoil of the tunnel. There was no day there and no peace: the shrill roar of escaping steam; the groans of mighty engines heaving ponderous loads of earth to the surface; the click-clack of lesser engines pumping dry the numerous springs by which the drift was intersected; the reverberating thunder of the small blasts of powder fired upon the mining works; the rumble of trains of trucks; the clatter of horses’ feet; the clank of chains; the strain of cordage; and a myriad of other sounds, accordant and discordant. There were to be seen miners from Cornwall, drift-borers from Wales, pitmen from Staffordshire and Northumberland, engineers from Yorkshire and Lancashire, navvies—Englishmen, Scotchmen, and Irishmen—from everywhere, muck-shifters, pickmen, barrowmen, brakes-men, banksmen, drivers, gaffers, gangers, carpenters, bricklayers, labourers, and boys of all sorts, ages and sizes; some engaged upon the inverts beneath the rails, some upon the drains below these, some upon the extension of the drifts, some clearing away the falling earth, some loading it upon the trucks, some

working like bees in cells building up the tunnel sides, some upon the centre turning the great arches, some stretched upon their backs putting the key-bricks to the crown—all speaking in a hundred dialects, with dangers known and unknown impending on every side; with commands and countermands echoing about through air murky with the smoke and flame of burning tar-barrels, cressets, and torches."

Such was the interior of Watford tunnel. There were shops in it, too: not only beer or fuddling-shops, but tommy-shops. The navy knows that he is a helpless being if he cannot get his tommy; and this word, which comprehends all animal supplies (drink is wet tommy), signifies beef, bacon, cheese, coffee, bread, butter, and tobacco.

My job as bucket-steerer did not last long; for the drift north of the tunnel being soon cut through, no more earth was taken up the shaft; it was all carried out through Hazlewood cutting, to be used in the formation of the long embankment between Hunton Bridge and King's Langley.

Frazer, who told me that I was a handy lad, did not discharge me altogether, but shifted me to a gang of regular navvies in the tunnel. With my first fortnight's wages I had got me a suit of new moleskin and a pair of highlows; now, therefore, I had only to buy pick and shovel, and my equipment was complete. My hands had become coarse, my face was sunburnt, and my hair shaggy. What matter? I felt a hearty pride in myself, and my prospects.

The gang I joined consisted of some forty men, each of whom bore a nickname. There were Happy Jack, Long Bob, Dusty Tom, Billy-goat, Frying-pan, Red-head, and the rest with names more or less ludicrous. For myself, my new clothes and tools entitled me to the style of Dandy Dick. I was fined two gallons footing, which I paid; and was put to work with a lad, whom they called Kick Daddy, in clearing out a trench.

With this gang I worked steadily and punctually, making no enemies and one friend. This friend was Canting George; a tall, thin, hard-lined, stern-featured, middle-aged man, commonly sneered at by his fellows because he was said to be religious; though I never knew him attempt to make a proselyte, or interfere at any time by word or deed with drinking, swearing, quarrelling, or fighting. His only cause of offence, as far as my observation extended, was, that he was never at any time drunk or riotous himself. Canting George was a native of an obscure spot in Warwickshire. He was an extreme Calvinist, and miserably ignorant, for he could not even read; yet he possessed very good reasoning powers.

My education having more than once betrayed itself, this man, who had a thirst for knowledge, fastened himself upon me. But his friendship was not altogether selfish; for

I soon owed much to his protection. Bull-head, as our ganger was called; was a surly brute, and Canting George frequently saved me from his violence. But for him, too, instead of continuing to live at my lodgings in a clean cottage at Hunton Bridge, I should have been compelled to live in the shanty with the rest of the gang; and rather than have done that, I should have given up the effort to make myself an engineer altogether.

The shanty was a building of stone, brick, mud, and timber, and roofed partly with tile and partly with tarpaulin. It consisted of a single oblong room, and stood upon a piece of spare ground near the tunnel mouth; another nearly shanty tenanted by another of Frazer's gangs, stood upon the high ground just above; and between both, under a single roof, were Frazer's office and his tommy-shop.

Almost every gang of navvies—and there were sixty, at least, employed upon the tunnel—was thus lodged; so that there were several of these dens of wild men round about the works. The bricklayers, masons, mechanics, and their labourers were distributed among the adjacent population, carrying disorder and uproar wherever they went. I will not attempt to say what might have been the social aspect of affairs in the neighbourhood of the line if the hordes of reckless navigators had been lodged in the same way. Their own arrangement was made, not on moral grounds, entirely by the men and their gaffers (the sub-contractors) to suit their own convenience; for the navvie does not like to reside far from his work.

The domestic arrangements of the navigators' shanties were presided over by a set of blear-eyed old crones, of whom there was one to each gang. They were expected to cook, make the beds, wash and mend the clothes of their masters; who beat them fearfully whenever the fancy of any one or more of their rough lords and masters inclined to that refreshment. In all the obscenity and blasphemy they bore their part; in the fighting they also lent a hand. With features frightfully disfigured, with heads cut and bandaged, they made themselves at home in the midst of everything from which pride and virtue shrink aghast.

Once only I visited our shanty. I was, in spare hours, teaching George Hatley to read; and it happened one Sunday morning early in May that the rain, hindering church attendance, I strolled up to the shanty to find George; but he was gone out. Old Peg, the presiding crone, who was then exhibiting two black eyes and a bandaged chin, told me that he would be back by eleven—it was then past ten; and, having cursed me in a way intended to be very friendly, she invited me to wait till he returned. So I sat down on a three-legged stool, and took a survey of the place.

The door was about midway in one of the sides, having a window on each side of it,

and near one of the windows were a few rude benches and seats. Of such of my comrades as were up, four or five were sprawling on these seats, two lying flat upon the earthen floor playing at cards, and one sat on a stool mending his boots. These men all greeted me with a gruff welcome, and pressed me to drink. Near the other window were three barrels of beer, all in tap, the keys of which were chained to a stout leathern girdle, which encircled old Peg's waist. Her seat—an old-fashioned arm-chair—was handy to these barrels, of which she was tapster. The opposite side and one end of the building were fitted up from floor to roof—which was low—in a manner similar to the between-decks of an emigrant ship. In each of the berths there lay one or two of my mates—for this was their knock-off Sunday—all drunk or asleep. Each man lay with his head upon his kit (his bundle of clothes); and, nestling with many of the men were dogs and litters of puppies of the bull or lurcher breed; for a navvie's dog was, of course, either for fighting or poaching.

The other end of the room served as the kitchen. There was a rude dresser in one corner, upon which and a ricketty table was arranged a very miscellaneous set of plates and dishes, in tin, wood, and earthenware, each holding an equally ill-matched cup, basin, or bowl. Against the wall were fixed a double row of cupboards or lockers, one to each man; these were the tommy-boxes, and below them, suspended from stout nails and hooks, were several large pots and pans. Over the fireplace, which was nearly central, there were also hung about a dozen guns. In the other corner was a large copper, beneath which a blazing fire was roaring: a volume of savoury steam was escaping from beneath the lid, and old Peg, muttering and spluttering ever and anon, threw on more coals and kept the copper boiling. Now, as I looked at this copper, I noticed a riddle not particularly hard to solve. Depending over its side, were several strings, communicating with the interior; and, to each of these, was attached a piece of wood. Peg, muttering and spluttering, was continually handling one or more of these mysteries. I asked her the meaning of them.

"Them!" said Peg, speaking in a broad Lancashire dialect, and taking a stick in her hand; "why, sith'ee lad—this bit o' stick has four nicks in't—well it's Billy-goat's dinner: he's abed yond. Now this," taking up another with six nicks, "is that divil Redhead's, and this," seizing a third with ten nicks, "is Happy Jack's. Well, thee know'st, he's got a bit o' beef; Redhead's nowt but taters—he's a gradely brute is Redhead; an' Billy-goat's got a pun or so o' bacon an' a cabbage. Now thee sees I've a matter o' twenty dinners or so to bile every day, which I biles in nets; an if I didna'

fix 'em in this road (manner) I should'na never tell where to find 'em, and then there'd be sich a row as never yet was heard on." Shortly afterwards Red Whipper came in, bringing with him a leveret. This was a signal for Peg. His orders to her were, "Get it ready, and put it in along o' the rest, and look sharp, or thee's head may be broken." He then took off his jacket and boots and tumbled up into a berth.

In the course of the month of June, Frazer took more work, and set on two or three extra gangs of navvies. One of these built a shanty nearly opposite to the one occupied by my gang. These new-comers were chiefly Irish, and they had not been there many days before a row took place, which, while it lasted, brought picks, spades, shovels, mauls, beetle-cudgels, and every available weapon into active service. The fight took place on a Saturday evening, about two hours after pay-time. It was our fortnightly pay-day; and the men being well sprung with drink, the affray was desperate. It lasted for more than an hour; no interruption being offered to the combatants. Indeed nothing short of military interference could have quelled such a disturbance. My gang was victorious. But their triumph was dearly purchased: five of our comrades were shockingly hacked and disabled. More than a dozen of the Irishmen were mangled, and one was taken up for dead. The finale of this war was the burning of the Paddies' shanty. After this ejectionment order was restored.

Later in the summer occurred that terrible disaster by which upwards of thirty men, were buried alive by the in-falling of a mass of earth. Fourteen were not rescued until life was extinct, and the last body not recovered until after a lapse of three weeks. Of those who were rescued alive, all, with the exception of one man, sustained more or less of corporeal injury—fractures, contusions, and bruises. This man, who owed his rescue to having been at work beneath some shelving planks when the earth fell in, was taken out crazed, and died shortly after a raving madman. The causes assigned for the accident were conflicting; and, as is usual in such cases, each party did their best to fix the blame upon the other—the engineers upon the contractors, these upon their sub-contractors, and these again upon those beneath them. I believe that the disaster was really attributable to a foreman of bricklayers, who madly, and against orders, drew away the centering of some newly-turned arches; the earth followed; and the doomed men beneath—presuming the cause I have given to be the right one—became the victims of a drunken man's temerity.

The scene was terrible. Above yawned an abyss, down which huge trees had been carried, for it was woodland here above the tunnel; the trunks of many had been snapped

like sticks, and the roots of some were branching up into the air. Below, on either side of the mass, were gangs of brave, daring men—the navvie is a bold fellow when danger is to be faced—endeavouring to work their way through it. Day and night, for one-and-twenty days, these labours unremittingly continued, until at length the body of the last victim was found.

George Hatley, having got on with his studies, informed Frazer, who was little better than no scholar at all, of his new capabilities. With the jealousy peculiar to ignorance, Frazer had never been able to tolerate the idea of having a well-dressed or well-educated clerk in his employment, and his sphere of operations had for that reason been limited to works under his own supervision. Now, however, he felt that if he could get another contract on some other portion of the line, George could be safely put in charge of it. Frazer accordingly put in for, and obtained a contract to carry a portion of the drift through Northchurch tunnel; over this job he appointed George his gaffer, and George then got me to be appointed his assistant and time-keeper. So to Northchurch tunnel we went, early in October; and, under the directions of the engineers, opened the drift at the north end of the tunnel; sinking a shaft about midway on our length, which was, I think, about one hundred and fifty yards. By the middle of November we had six gang of navvies at work—each from thirty to forty strong; and Frazer, who came down twice a week to give directions and watch progress, never before, as I believe, had felt, himself so great a man. He purchased a new suit of clothes, displayed a watch-guard; and, but for his vulgar mind and manners, would have passed for a gentleman.

The men at Northchurch were, if possible, a more desperate and licentious set than those whom I had known at Watford tunnel. They had just come off a job on the Birmingham canal, and at first called themselves muck-shifters and navigators, holding the abbreviation “navvie” in contempt. They were not lodged in shanties, but in surrounding villages and in the neighbouring town of Great Berkhamstead.

The soil through which we were carrying the drift of Northchurch tunnel was of a most treacherous character, and caused many disasters. Despite every precaution, the earth would at times fall in, and that, too, when and where we least expected. Thus, in the fifth week of our contract, notwithstanding that our shoring was of extra strength and well strutted, an immense mass of earth suddenly came down upon us. This came from the tapping of a quicksand. One stroke of a pick did it. The vein was shelving and the sand, finding a vent, ran like so much water into the open drift; which was of course speedily choked up. George Hatley

was at once on the spot; and, under his directions efforts were promptly made to clear away the sand, so that the shoring should be re-strengthened if possible before the earth above (deprived of the support afforded by the sand) should collapse. The most strenuous efforts were made in vain. There came a low rumbling, like the distant booming of artillery, then followed crashes louder than the thunder, startling us from our labour; and, while we were hurrying away, down came the whole mass of earth, masonry, timber, and sand, crushing five men under it.

Of these men three were dug out alive, and removed—terribly mangled—to the West Herts Infirmary; the other two were found dead. They belonged to a gang, of which one Hicks or Bunkerbo, was ganger. I have described Frazer as a man terribly profane, but Hicks was in this matter his master. These were the first lives lost in Northchurch tunnel, and Hicks was overjoyed to think that they belonged to his own gang. He looked forward to the funeral; and, having organised a subscription of a shilling per head throughout all the gangs in the tunnel—which subscription realised twenty pounds—five pounds were set apart to pay for burial of the dead, and the rest was reserved to be spent in rioting and drunkenness.

The funerals took place on the afternoon of the Sunday following the disaster, in the churchyard of Northchurch parish. The procession was headed by Hicks, who walked before the coffins; behind followed about fifty navvies, all more or less drunk, and the rear was brought up by a host of stragglers, and country girls, the companions of the navvies. There were no real mourners; the unfortunate men being strangers in the district, and the residences of their friends unknown. It was about half-past two o'clock when the train reached the gates of the churchyard. At the church-door the officiating minister, observing the condition of the men, wisely ordered the church to be closed, and proceeded to lead the way to the grave. Hicks took umbrage at this, and threatened to break the door open; but as this was not seconded among his men, he told them to put the coffins on the ground, and let the parson do all the business himself. But the men hesitated, the sexton protested, and at length the grave was reached. Here Hicks found fresh cause for offence. It was a single grave, and he said (which was untrue) that separate graves had been paid for. When this was disproved, he objected that the one grave was not deep enough, and ordered two of his men to jump in and dig it to Hell. The men jumped in as ordered, one had the sexton's pickaxe, the other the spade, and in little more than ten minutes the grave was ten feet deeper. Still the men dug on, and continued their labour, till they could no longer throw the earth to the surface.

Then rose the question, how were they to get out? The sexton's short ladder was useless, for the grave was at least twenty-feet deep. Hicks settled the matter by calling for "the ropes!" "What ropes?" "The coffin ropes." These were brought and lowered to the men. With a loud hurrah they were drawn up, and the clergyman was told to "go on."

The good man, pale and terrified, incoherently hurried through the service, closed the book, and was gathering up his surplice for a precipitate departure, when Hicks grasped him by the collar and, with fearful imprecations, demanded a gallon or two of beer, "for," he said, "you do not get two of 'em in the hole every day." Then followed an atrocious scene. A crowd had collected in the churchyard, and several of the villagers came forth to the rescue of their curate, who narrowly escaped uninjured. A desperate fight, during which one or two men were thrown into the open grave, terminated the affair.

This revolting outrage was not allowed to go unpunished. Hicks and a batch of his men were arrested on the following Tuesday while helplessly intoxicated—in which state they had been ever since the funerals—and were committed to the county jail.

Shortly after Christmas, when another man was killed, his ganger proposed to raffle the body. The idea took immensely, and was actually carried out. Nearly three hundred men joined in the scheme. The raffle money, sixpence a member, was to go towards a drinking bout at the funeral, the whole expense of which was to be borne jointly by those throwing the highest and lowest numbers. The raffle took place, and so did the revel; but the funeral, after a fortnight's delay, was performed by the parish.

In the month of February, eighteen hundred and thirty-six, Frazer took a contract to dig ballast at Tring; and, youth as I was—although I was tall and masculine for my years—sent me down there to have charge of the job; on which there were about fifty men employed.

The job was bravely started, and things went on smoothly enough for the first ten days, when, lo! it was reported that there was a bogie in the ballast pit. These men who could defy alike death and danger became panic stricken. The idea that the pit was haunted filled them with a mortal terror, of which the infection heightened as it spread. At first the current rumour was that picks, shovels, and barrows were moved from their places nightly by the bogie; then it came to be credited that earth was dug, barrow-runs broken up, tools spoiled, trucks shunted, and even tipped by him in his nightly visits. Finally, in the second week of his pranks he was said to have appeared, and then the men struck work in the body. Reasoning with them was useless; the old

ganger, as spokesman for the rest, declared as the result of his former experience that "there was no tackling the old un," and to a man they refused to re-enter the pit.

I had previously communicated with Frazer on the subject; but, in this emergency, I despatched a messenger specially for him. He came down the same night, bringing with him a band of chosen roughs from Watford tunnel. These men had a ganger with an unmentionable nickname, a fellow who declared that his chaps were prepared to work with the devil, and for the devil, so long as they got their pay, and to set the very devil himself to work should he appear amongst them. Frazer expected much from this gang; and, next morning, they commenced work in earnest. But on the second day they, too, became possessed with the same superstitious terror as their predecessors; and they also struck. Persuasives, promises, and threats were alike unavailing; the men would not "go agin the bogie," and the pit was once again deserted.

Frazer, raved like a madman. He was under a penalty to dig so much ballast per week, and the very urgency of his case made him desperate. I suggested to set on a gang of farm labourers; of whom there were plenty out of employ in the neighbourhood, and to whom the high rate of wages would be an inducement. He assented; and, in a day or two, we were at work again swimmingly, and continued so for a week, when the old contagion showed itself, and another suspension appeared inevitable. It came at last, but was for some time averted by the allowance of rations of tommy, in addition to wages, and by seeing that every man was half drunk before he went to work. When, at last, these men also struck, I really think their striking was attributable more to the intimidation practised by the old hands—many of whom were lurking about—towards these knobsticks, than from the influence of any other terror.

But the moral effect of this last strike upon Frazer was wondrous. Never since then have I seen a bold daring man so thoroughly beaten. He became melancholy, and told me piteously that he hadn't got the heart to swear. My advice was to throw up the contract; but of this he would not hear; he would sooner cut his throat, he said. Before doing this, however, I suggested that he ought to send for Hatley and consult with him. He sneered at this, but eventually instructed me to send for him. George came, heard the history of the case; and, like a thorough general—as he has ever since proved himself—proposed to work the pit with three shifts of men working eight hours each during the whole twenty-four. "That," said he, "will settle the bogie, for he'll never have a minute to himself for his work."

The soundness of this idea, it was impossible to gainsay. George returned to North-

church, and brought back to the pit sixty of his own men. These he divided into gangs of twenty each, and kept the pit in constant work by day and night. Every Monday the gangs changed shifts, so that night work fell to the lot of each once in three weeks. In this manner our bogie was laid without the assistance of twelve clergymen, whom, Frazer had been advised by an old lady, to engage for the purpose.

Frazer, now no longer contemplating suicide, concluded terms of partnership with Hatley, and the new firm, resolving to launch forth into a wider field, dispatched me to London to make tracings of the drawings, and copy the specifications of certain brickwork to be executed in the Hunton Bridge district. This work they obtained; the management of the Tring ballast pit was placed jointly with the Northchurch tunnel contract under the direction of Hatley, and I was placed upon this new work. I was a fair draughtsman, understood the "jometry" of the thing, as the navvies called the setting out of work; and in the truly practical character of my present labours, found an ample recompense for the past twelve months of toil and privation.

A publican in the neighbourhood of the bridges comprised in our contract had given offence to the bricklayers, and they had ceased to deal with him; but, no sooner was this bridge commenced, than he was again favoured with their custom; although his was by no means the nearest hostelry. Boniface, of course, was only too happy to receive their patronage; but his self-gratulations received a check from always finding himself short of pots and cans. He was ready to avow that they had been sent to the men at their work; he was equally certain they had not been returned; and it was no less true that they were nowhere to be found. He waited a few days, and his stock continued to decrease. The men ordered their beer in large quantities; but, though he loved good custom and plenty of it, the loss of pots and cans would have compelled him to decline their further favours, if he had not been afraid of throwing the field open to a rival. For some time he renewed his stock and bore his loss; until at last he resolved to have the men watched as they left their work, and, if possible, to discover who the thieves were. He watched in vain; for, as the piers of the bridge were carried up from the foundations, so from time to time were the publican's cans built in with them; and to this day they form part of the structure.

We had several north-country bricklayers at work for us, and between two of them—natives of Wigan, I believe—while building the parapet walls of a bridge, there arose a dispute which resulted in a fierce battle. The question upon which issue was joined, was the much-vexed one in the trade, of English

or Flemish bond,—which was which. To decide this, a fair rough-and-tumble fight, with some nice purring, was proposed among their comrades, and instantly agreed to. "Send for the purring-boots!" was the cry; and the men jumped down from the scaffold, and repaired to the adjacent field. The purring-boots duly came. They were stout high-lows, each shod with an iron-plate, standing an inch or so in advance of the toe. Each man was to wear one boot, with which he was to kick the other to the utmost. A toss took place for right or left, and the winner of the right having a small foot the boot was stuffed with hay to make it fit. I refrain from particulars: I have said enough to show the brutal nature of the affray. It lasted more than an hour. The victor was a pitiable object for months, and his foe was crippled for life. Here I must add, that the old fashion of deciding questions by the trial of combat prevailed widely among the first race of navvies. More than one question of right or user so decided has remained undisturbed to this hour. I myself saw a pitched battle, fought between two plate-layers to decide whether "beetle" or "mawl," was the right name for a certain tool—a ponderous wooden hammer—respecting which there was a difference among this body of men throughout the district. The contest was fierce and desperate, but eventually "mawl" vanquished; and, as a consequence, "beetle" was expunged from the platelayers' vocabulary.

Of course, these fights bear no proportion to, nor are they to be confounded with those in which the combatants did violence to each other out of personal animosity, or under the influence of drink. These disgraceful brawls were of daily occurrence, monstrous both for their atrocity, and, in the case of navvies, for the numbers engaged in them, and made the very name of these men a by-word and a terror. For navvies, it must be borne in mind, do not usually fight single-handed, or man to man; their system of fighting is in whole gangs or "all of a ruck," as they term it. So, newspaper-readers may remember that, "desperate affray with navigators," or "fearful battle between navigators and the police," or whoever it may be, generally used to head the accounts given of disturbances in which those men were engaged; but an account of a fight between two of them was very rarely seen.

At length, in the summer of the year eighteen hundred and thirty-six, the fearful depravity of the men working upon railways, and the demoralising influence upon the surrounding population, became matter of public notoriety (I speak of the district within my own observation); and missions were organised by various religious sections of the community for their reclamation. The object was most praiseworthy; for by no class was reformation more radically re-

quired than by railway makers of every grade, from the gaffers to the tip-boy. In my humble opinion, however, the efforts made were rather calculated to bring the object attempted into disrepute, than to accomplish it; and that these efforts failed is not to be gainsayed. Thus, many well-dressed, and doubtless well-meaning persons, obtained permission to visit the men on the works, during meal times, with the view of imparting religious instruction to them, and did so. The distribution of religious tracts, and the usual machinery of proselytism, were shortly in active operation, and the men's dinner-hour, instead of being a period of rest and relaxation, was converted into a time for admonition and harangue.

An elderly man who was very officious in the distribution of tracts—which would not be received—all at once found them acceptable and even in demand. He was overjoyed, talked among his fellows of a revival, and came loaded daily with his wares. The success of his labours was now spoken of as a decided and encouraging fact, and doubtless would have been considered so till now, had he not one day been taken to a shanty, the walls of which had been doubly papered with his tracts, over which a thick coat of white-wash was then being plastered. On one occasion I remember walking down to the tunnel, and was joined at Hazlewood Bridge by a missionary. He detailed to me how he had nearly been a martyr to the cause; how he had been twice nearly drawn half-way up the shaft in a bucket and suddenly let down; how he had been run out on trucks to the tip-head; how he had been shunted on a lorry and left upon the spoil-bank for hours; and how all sorts of practical jokes had been played upon him, and yet he felt the interest of the men so deeply at heart that, despite all, he must persevere. I could respect and admire this enthusiast; although I did not think he used the right means to attain his purpose.

The right steps towards the conversion of navvies were soon afterwards taken by Mr. now Sir T. M. Peto, Mr. Thomas Jackson, Mr. Brassey, and other gentlemen; who, having entered into contracts on a vast scale, made the social condition of their men a matter of primary consideration. In several districts suitable dwellings were erected for them; in towns, cottages were run up. For these a small rent was deducted from wages; but, in some cases, suitable lodgings were provided and paid for by the contractor. The gaffers and gangers were not allowed to keep tommy and beershops; wages were paid in money, and there was no truck. The hours of labour also were duly regulated; and regulations as to the proper conduct of work in hand and those executing it were duly enforced. Beer in barrels, casks, and even in pails, had formerly been brought upon the works. All this was strictly forbidden; men were no longer brought fuddled to their

work, nor kept fuddled at it, in order that, under the influence of drink, they might get through more in a given time. A certain quantity of beer was permitted to be brought to each man during the hours of labour: this being regulated according to circumstances and the nature of the work. Under such rule as this, railway-makers of every trade—and the navvie more especially—became at length somewhat disciplined. Self-respect was inculcated; respect for the laws of sobriety, and decorum followed in due course; and thus was effected the great moral revolution in the condition of the railway-labourer, to which all who have been conversant with railway operations during the last twenty years, can most emphatically testify.

COAST FOLK.

ALTHOUGH I was born in a seaside town, I am not entitled, as the waves did not reach, and the spray did not wet the house of my birth, to repeat the grand boast of the Fisher people of the east coast of Scotland, and to say, I was born with the sea in my mouth. The world-renowned silver spoon is nothing when compared with this magnificent buccal ornament. Some men have several, but all men have two births,—the birth of the organism, and the birth of the memory. Authentic tradition, analogical observation, and sound reasoning, compel us to believe we were born, nursed, and weaned, although we know nothing about our experiences of these important operations. Biographical doubts in the most sceptical of minds have never attacked these facts, although absolute oblivion and entire unconsciousness hide from us all the earlier months and events of our existence. The mammalian epoch is a period of moving time which we are compelled to confound with the immobile eternity of the past in which we did not exist at all. The only birth of which we have the certain knowledge of personal consciousness is the birth of the memory, the awakening of the observation, the earliest recollection of the first vivid pictures still remaining in the picture stores of the mind. One of my earliest recollections is of being awoke by the morning sun shining in upon me when lying in a bed with white dimity curtains, opposite which stood a chest of mahogany drawers with a white coverlet upon the top of it, and surmounted by a magnificent model of a three-decked and three-masted ship, completely rigged and fully equipped, and with cannons in all the port-holes. Rapturous admiration is the only phrase which can convey an idea of my entranced contemplation of this miracle of art. How old I was I do not know. I remember it was about the time when it was quite an effort of courage for me to slide out of bed by myself while clutching the sheet to prevent a sudden drop and a fall upon the floor. I could not have

long lost at the time the straight back of a quadruped which we all commence life with, may it please your lordship, and enjoyed the curvature essential to the equilibrium of rectitude, which comes when we are about two or three years of age. Many mornings of admiring contemplation, I remember, preceded the memorable morning when, with a proud feeling of ingenuity and daring, I placed a chair before the drawers, and climbed up and handled the ship. I suspect I became afraid to come down again, and by screaming for assistance got help and reproof; but as there is nothing flattering to my vanity in this part of the incident, I beg to say I do not vouch for the exactitude of it. During all my infancy and boyhood, I heard little else talked about except boats and ships, fishings and voyages, harbours and storms. The youth of sea-port towns are early taught the worship of enterprise and adventure. Long before I knew what kings and queens were, my imagination was full of brilliant images of smugglers, privateers, and pirates as cruel demons of the ocean, and my soul was penetrated with admiration of skilful shipbuilders, cool-minded captains, courageous sailors, and adventurous navigators. As for poor George the Third, he was completely hidden and eclipsed from me by the glare of the flames of the tar-barrels burned upon every fourth of June; and the existence of George the Fourth was first revealed with force and distinctness to me by the illuminations for the acquittal of Queen Caroline. Old people belonging to a generation preceding my parents, never spoke of Napoleon Bonaparte without horror and scorn, and in the queer peculiarities of their moral notions and seaside eccentricities, taught me to reverence the discoverer of the mariner's compass, and the inventor of the methods in use for preserving herrings as food.

No doubt the kilted heroes of the bayonet who returned from occupying France after Waterloo, were surrounded with a noble lustre in the eyes of the boys who witnessed their entries into their native towns. But grey authorities insisted they ought not to be placed above the brave men who distinguished themselves in voyages to the regions of tremendous ice or tremendous heat. It is astonishing what an air of dignity and romance was thrown around the science and art, sufferings and adventures, of the fishings for cod, ling, haddocks, salmon, herrings, and whales. Heroic as the Saint George who killed the dragon, appeared to me a brave and cool harpooner, who had triumphed over vast mountains of ice jamming in his ship, and over immense sea-monsters, sometimes smashing his boats with a blow, and sometimes running out, in league-long chases, a thousand fathoms of line. Indeed, in seaside places, sea-heroes who had served their generation and country by contending against storms and against war-ships; navigators who

had discovered unknown islands, and inventors who had tamed the elements; were the great men whose "foot-prints upon the sands of time" were pointed out to stimulate and encourage youth by the venerable persons of a by-gone generation.

When any of my country cousins used to come upon a visit to my family, after a first glance of amazement at the sea and its ships, and the shore and its wonders, the first objects of their curiosity, and subjects of their questions, were the customs and manners of seaside folks. This was natural enough, for coast folks differ much from country folks.

The calculation is too difficult to be dogmatic about, but perhaps I may be allowed to guess that the majority of mankind who have lived, have never seen the sea, and the majority of mankind now alive have never seen it. This probability seems all the more curious when we reflect that the land makes only one-fourth, while the sea covers the remaining three-fourths of the surface of the globe. Persons who had never seen the sea used to be numerous in London, and they still abound in Paris. However, the stage-coaches did much, and the railways are doing more to diminish their numbers.

An intelligent lady, a native of Paris, well acquainted with the French, English, and Spanish literature, once said to me, "I have never seen the sea, and cannot form the least idea of what like it is." This is just the chorus of all persons in her predicament, "I cannot form the least idea of what like it is." When they have appealed to me to help them in trying to form an idea of the ocean, I have felt compelled, after reflecting a little, to answer by advising them to take the railway, and go and see it. After so many masters of description have tried it, I thought I had best let it alone.

A lady, on seeing the sea at Brighton for the first time, exclaimed, "What a beautiful field!" She had never seen such a beautiful green, moving, sparkling, grassy prairie. Mr. Leigh Hunt lavished a page of admiration in the *Liberal* upon a line of Ariosto's describing the waves as

Neptune's white herds lowing o'er the deep.

Anacreon exclaims in language appropriate to calm seas and smooth sand-beaches, "How the waves of the sea kiss the shore!" Saint Lambert, in his *Saisons*, has four lines descriptive of the waves of a stormy sea dashing upon the beach, which have been much admired by writers upon imitative harmony. "Neptune has raised up his turbulent plains, the sea falls and leaps upon the trembling shores. She remounts, groans, and with redoubled blows makes the abyss and the shaken mountains resound."

Neptune a soulevé les plaines turbulentes ;
La mer tombe et bondit sur ses rives tremblantes ;
Elle remonte, gronde, et ses coups redoublés
Font retentir l'abîme et les monts ébranlés.

La Harpe asks if the two hemistichs—

La mer tombe et bondit—Elle remonte, gronde—

do not make us hear the noise of the flood which knocks against the shore, or which is repelled back again towards the high sea?

Whatever vague conceptions of the ocean people who have never seen it may have obtained of it, they owe to the poets. But both science and poetry, truthful observation and harmonious expression, have much work before them ere they will suffice to give an idea of the sea prior to observation of it. Were I not doubtful of successfully hitting the nice distinction between an epigram and an impertinence, I would say of all their books and all their songs upon the sea—A plague upon them, for they are not worth the price of an excursion-ticket to see it!

I shall suppose the large circle of country cousins I have now the honour of addressing have, after knowing much of what prosers and poets have said about the seaside, the good sense to go and see it. Their first exclamation is, how different the ideas they had derived from books were from the impressions they now derive directly from observation!

Months of observation will not exhaust the admiration and wonder inspired by watching the vast glassy field whose waves leap up in spray against the rocks, or run up edged with a froth, and playing with the pebbles upon the smooth sandbeach. During intervals of wonder at the seaside, they feel a necessity for some one to tell them what the things are which they see there. In trying to gratify this laudable curiosity, I shall follow what I remember was the order of the questions addressed to me by new-comers to the seaside. Should any bookish naturalist sneer at this method, and look big while discoursing about the mineral, vegetable, animal, and hominal kingdoms, I may tell him his classifications are chiefly expressive of a time when students were pitifully afraid of kings, and called groups of things kingdoms less with a view to describe nature than to flatter the masters of their fortunes, liberties, and lives. All things are classified by death and life. The stars are all dead. Plants and animals are both alive. These are the two vast groups of things in the universe. There is no such difference as this difference between the dead and the living, and I hope I may be permitted to make it the basis of my classification of nature. All the forms of life encountered at the seaside have characteristics of their own; and I have always found them the first objects of the curiosity of intelligent observers. Man is always to man the most interesting of living or animated creatures.

The classifications of men according to nations and races, in which men of science have studied mankind, might be advantageously increased by dividing and observing them under the divisions of country folk of the plains and hills, and town folk and coast folk. All classifications are just turns and shakes of the kaleidoscope, and this one may yield insight and instruction as well as the others. Men of plains, men of mountains, and men of towns, and men of shores, are profoundly different from each other in their ethnological characteristics. There are great moral differences between them; and, while identical in structure, they differ greatly in their anatomical and physiological developments.

No doubt all the ingenuity of men gifted with geniuses for finding differences, has never been able to impugn the doctrine of the unity of man. The European, Ethiopian, Mongolian, and American, are but different varieties of one species. As Buffon has said it beautifully: "Man, white in Europe, black in Africa, yellow in Asia, and red in America, is nothing but the same man differently dyed by climate."

Most certainly this sentence might be imitated, and it might be said: Man, broad on the coasts, tall on the plains, ruddy upon the mountains, and pale in towns, is always the same man modified by locality.

Observation, conversation, and reading, have told me something respecting English, Irish, and French coast populations; but the coast folk I had the best opportunities of studying in my youth were the fishers of Footdee, and of the Bridge of Don at Aberdeen, who still appear to me the most interesting and remarkable of coast folk. The older I grow, and the more I have travelled, the better worthy of record appears the information I have collected respecting them. Perhaps I do not deceive myself when I fancy the study of coast folk in general a somewhat new point of view of a natural group of mankind, which will be found to emit picturesque and useful lights upon several practical questions at present tumbling and tossing about in tenebrous agitation. Fortunately I am able to compare and combine with my own observations on the Aberdeen fishing communities, those of an observer of nearly a hundred years ago,—a venerable and intelligent lady, now no more, having confided to me her *Recollections of Footdee in the Last Century*.

Besides describing the curious manners of a very remarkable race of coast folk, these combined recollections and observations in two different centuries may suggest useful thoughts to minds which consider the poor. Next week, then, I shall beg to present them.

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OUT OF THE SEASON.

It fell to my lot, this last bleak Spring, to find myself in a watering-place out of the Season. A vicious north-east squall blew me into it from foreign parts, and I tarried in it alone for three days, resolved to be exceedingly busy.

On the first day, I began business by looking for two hours at the sea, and staring the Foreign Militia out of countenance. Having disposed of these important engagements, I sat down at one of the two windows of my room, intent on doing something desperate in the way of literary composition, and writing a chapter of unheard-of excellence—with which the present essay has no connexion.

It is a remarkable quality in a watering-place out of the season, that everything in it, will and must be looked at. I had no previous suspicion of this fatal truth; but, the moment I sat down to write, I began to perceive it. I had scarcely fallen into my most promising attitude, and dipped my pen in the ink, when I found the clock upon the pier—a redfaced clock with a white rim—importuning me in a highly vexatious manner to consult my watch, and see how I was off for Greenwich time. Having no intention of making a voyage or taking an observation, I had not the least need of Greenwich time, and could have put up with watering-place time as a sufficiently accurate article. The pier-clock, however, persisting, I felt it necessary to lay down my pen, compare my watch with him, and fall into a grave solicitude about half-seconds. I had taken up my pen again, and was about to commence that valuable chapter, when a Custom-house cutter under the window requested that I would hold a naval review of her, immediately.

It was impossible, under the circumstances, for any mental resolution, merely human, to dismiss the Custom-house cutter, because the shadow of her topmast fell upon my paper, and the vane played on the masterly blank chapter. I was therefore under the necessity of going to the other window; sitting astride of the chair there, like Napoleon bivouacking in the print; and inspecting the cutter as she lay, all that day, in the way of my chapter, O! She was rigged to

carry a quantity of canvas, but her hull was so very small that four giants aboard of her (three men and a boy) who were vigilantly scraping at her, all together, inspired me with a terror lest they should scrape her away. A fifth giant, who appeared to consider himself "below"—as indeed he was, from the waist downwards—meditated, in such close proximity with the little gusty chimney-pipe, that he seemed to be smoking it. Several boys looked on from the wharf, and, when the gigantic attention appeared to be fully occupied, one or other of these would furtively swing himself in mid-air over the Custom-house cutter, by means of a line pendant from her rigging, like a young spirit of the storm. Presently, a sixth hand brought down two little water-casks; presently afterwards, a truck came, and delivered a hamper. I was now under an obligation to consider that the cutter was going on a cruise, and to wonder where she was going, and when she was going, and why she was going, and at what date she might be expected back, and who commanded her? With these pressing questions I was fully occupied when the Packet, making ready to go across, and blowing off her spare steam, roared, "Look at me!"

It became a positive duty to look at the Packet preparing to go across; aboard of which, the people newly come down by the railroad were hurrying in a great fluster. The crew had got their tarry overalls on—and one knew what *that* meant—not to mention the white basins, ranged in neat little piles of a dozen each, behind the door of the after-cabin. One lady as I looked, one resigned and far-seeing woman, took her basin from the store of crockery, as she might have taken a refreshment-ticket, laid herself down on deck with that utensil at her ear, muffled her feet in one shawl, solemnly covered her countenance after the antique manner with another, and on the completion of these preparations appeared by the strength of her volition to become insensible. The mail-bags (O that I myself had the sea-legs of a mail-bag!) were tumbled aboard; the Packet left off roaring, warped out, and made at the white line upon the bar. One dip, one roll, one break of the sea over her bows, and Moore's Almanack or the sage Raphael could

not have told me more of the state of things aboard, than I knew.

The famous chapter was all but begun now, and would have been quite begun, but for the wind. It was blowing stiffly from the east, and it rumbled in the chimney and shook the house. That was not much; but, looking out into the wind's grey eye for inspiration, I laid down my pen again to make the remark to myself, how emphatically everything by the sea declares that it has a great concern in the state of the wind. The trees blown all one way; the defences of the harbor reared highest and strongest against the raging point; the shingle flung up on the beach from the same direction; the number of arrows pointed at the common enemy; the sea tumbling in and rushing towards them as if it were inflamed by the sight. This put it in my head that I really ought to go out and take a walk in the wind; so, I gave up the magnificent chapter for that day, entirely persuading myself that I was under a moral obligation to have a blow.

I had a good one, and that on the high road—the very high road—on the top of the cliffs, where I met the stage-coach with all the outsides holding their hats on and themselves too, and overtook a flock of sheep with the wool about their necks blown into such great ruffs that they looked like fleecy owls. The wind played upon the lighthouse as if it were a great whistle, the spray was driven over the sea in a cloud of haze, the ships rolled and pitched heavily, and at intervals long slants and flaws of light made mountain-steeps of communication between the ocean and the sky. A walk of ten miles brought me to a seaside town without a cliff, which, like the town I had come from, was out of the season too. Half of the houses were shut up; half of the other half were to let; the town might have done as much business as it was doing then, if it had been at the bottom of the sea. Nobody seemed to flourish save the attorney; his clerk's pen was going in the bow-window of his wooden house; his brass door-plate alone was free from salt, and had been polished up that morning. On the beach, among the rough luggers and capstans, groups of storm-beaten boatmen, like a sort of marine monsters, watched under the lee of those objects, or stood leaning forward against the wind, looking out through battered spy-glasses. The parlor bell in the Admiral Benbow had grown so flat with being out of the season, that neither could I hear it ring when I pulled the handle for lunch, nor could the young woman in black stockings and strong shoes, who acted as waiter out of the season, until it had been tinkled three times.

Admiral Benbow's cheese was out of the season, but his home-made bread was good, and his beer was perfect. Deluded by some earlier spring day which had been warm and sunny, the Admiral had cleared the firing

out of his parlor stove, and had put some flower-pots in—which was amiable and hopeful in the Admiral, but not judicious: the room being, at that present visiting, transcendently cold. I therefore took the liberty of peeping out across a little stone passage into the Admiral's kitchen, and, seeing a high settle with its back towards me drawn out in front of the Admiral's kitchen fire, I strolled in, bread and cheese in hand, munching and looking about. One landsman and two boatmen were seated on the settle, smoking pipes and drinking beer out of thick pint crockery mugs—mugs peculiar to such places, with parti-coloured rings round them, and ornaments between the rings like frayed-out roots. The landsman was relating his experience, as yet only three nights' old, of a fearful running-down case in the Channel, and therein presented to my imagination a sound of music that it will not soon forget.

"At that identical moment of time," said he (he was a prosy man by nature, who rose with his subject), "the night being light and calm, but with a grey mist upon the water that didn't seem to spread for more than two or three mile, I was walking up and down the wooden causeway next the pier, off where it happened, along with a friend of mine, which his name is Mr. Clocker. Mr. Clocker is a grocer over yonder." (From the direction in which he pointed the bowl of his pipe, I might have judged Mr. Clocker to be a Mer- man, established in the grocery trade in five-and-twenty fathoms of water.) "We were smoking our pipes, and walking up and down the causeway, talking of one thing and talking of another. We were quite alone there, except that a few hovellers" (the Kentish name for 'long-shore boatmen like his companions) "were hanging about their lugs, waiting while the tide made, as hovellers will." (One of the two boatmen, thoughtfully regarding me, shut up one eye; this I understood to mean: firstly, that he took me into the conversation: secondly, that he confirmed the proposition: thirdly, that he announced himself as a hoveller.) "All of a sudden Mr. Clocker and me stood rooted to the spot, by hearing a sound come through the stillness, right over the sea, like a great sorrowful flute or *Æolian harp*. We didn't in the least know what it was, and judge of our surprise when we saw the hovellers, to a man, leap into the boats and tear about to hoist sail and get off, as if they had every one of 'em gone, in a moment, raving mad! But *they* knew it was the cry of distress from the sinking emigrant ship."

When I got back to my watering-place out of the season, and had done my twenty miles in good style, I found that the celebrated Black Mesmerist intended favoring the public that evening in the Hall of the Muses, which he had engaged for the purpose. After a good dinner, seated by the fire in an easy chair, I began to waver in a design I had

formed of waiting on the Black Mesmerist, and to incline towards the expediency of remaining where I was. Indeed a point of gallantry was involved in my doing so, inasmuch as I had not left France alone, but had come from the prisons of St. Pélagie with my distinguished and unfortunate friend Madame Roland (in two volumes which I bought for two francs each, at the book-stall in the Place de la Concorde, Paris, at the corner of the Rue Royale). Deciding to pass the evening tête-à-tête with Madame Roland, I derived, as I always do, great pleasure from that spiritual woman's society, and the charms of her brave soul and engaging conversation. I must confess that if she had only some more faults, only a few more passionate failings of any kind, I might love her better; but I am content to believe that the deficiency is in me, and not in her. We spent some sadly interesting hours together on this occasion, and she told me again of her cruel discharge from the Abbaye, and of her being re-arrested before her free feet had sprung lightly up half-a-dozen steps of her own staircase, and carried off to the prison which she only left for the guillotine.

Madame Roland and I took leave of one another before midnight, and I went to bed full of vast intentions for next day, in connexion with the unparalleled chapter. To hear the foreign mail-steamers coming in at dawn of day, and to know that I was not aboard or obliged to get up, was very comfortable; so, I rose for the chapter in great force.

I had advanced so far as to sit down at my window again on my second morning, and to write the first half-line of the chapter and strike it out, not liking it, when my conscience reproached me with not having surveyed the watering-place out of the season, after all, yesterday, but with having gone straight out of it at the rate of four miles and a half an hour. Obviously the best amends that I could make for this remissness was to go and look at it without another moment's delay. So—altogether as a matter of duty—I gave up the magnificent chapter for another day, and sauntered out with my hands in my pockets.

All the houses and lodgings ever let to visitors, were to let that morning. It seemed to have snowed bills with To Let upon them. This put me upon thinking what the owners of all those apartments did, out of the season; how they employed their time, and occupied their minds. They could not be always going to the Methodist chapels, of which I passed one every other minute. They must have some other recreation. Whether they pretended to take one another's lodgings, and opened one another's tea-caddies in fun? Whether they cut slices off their own beef and mutton, and made believe that it belonged to somebody else? Whether they played little dramas of life, as children do,

and said, "I ought to come and look at your apartments, and you ought to ask two guineas a-week too much, and then I ought to say I must have the rest of the day to think of it, and then you ought to say that another lady and gentleman with no children in family had made an offer very close to your own terms, and you had passed your word to give them a positive answer in half-an-hour, and indeed were just going to take the bill down when you heard the knock, and then I ought to take them, you know"? Twenty such speculations engaged my thoughts. Then, after passing, still clinging to the walls, defaced rags of the bills of last year's Circus, I came to a back field near a timber-yard where the Circus itself had been, and where there was yet a sort of monkish tonsure on the grass, indicating the spot where the young lady had gone round upon her pet steed Firefly in her daring flight. Turning into the town again, I came among the shops, and they were emphatically out of the season. The chemist had no boxes of ginger-beer powders, no beautifying sea-side soaps and washes, no attractive scents; nothing but his great goggle-eyed red bottles, looking as if the winds of winter and the drift of the salt-sea had inflamed them. The grocers' hot pickles, Harvey's Sauce, Doctor Kitchener's Zest, Anchovy Paste, Dundee Marmalade, and the whole stock of luxurious helps to appetite, were hibernating somewhere under-ground. The china-shop had no trifles from anywhere. The Bazaar had given in altogether, and presented a notice on the shutters that this establishment would re-open at Whitsuntide, and that the proprietor in the meantime might be heard of at Wild Lodge, East Cliff. At the Sea-bathing Establishment, a row of neat little wooden houses seven or eight feet high, I saw the proprietor in bed in the shower-bath. As to the bathing-machines, they were (how they got there, is not for me to say) at the top of a hill at least a mile and a half off. The library, which I had never seen otherwise than wide open, was tight shut; and two peevish bald old gentlemen seemed to be hermetically sealed up inside, eternally reading the paper. That wonderful mystery, the music-shop, carried it off as usual (except that it had more cabinet pianos in stock), as if season or no season were all one to it. It made the same prodigious display of bright brazen wind-instruments, horribly twisted, worth, as I should conceive, some thousands of pounds, and which it is utterly impossible that anybody in any season can ever play or want to play. It had five triangles in the window, six pairs of castanets, and three harps; likewise every polka with a colored frontispiece that ever was published; from the original one where a smooth male and female Pole of high rank are coming at the observer with their arms a-kimbo, to the Ratcatcher's Daughter. Astonishing establishment, amazing enigma! Three other shops

were pretty much out of the season, what they were used to be in it. First, the shop where they sell the sailors' watches, which had still the old collection of enormous time-keepers, apparently designed to break a fall from the masthead: with places to wind them up, like fire-plugs. Secondly, the shop where they sell the sailors' clothing, which displayed the old sou'-westers, and the old oily suits, and the old pea-jackets, and the old one sea-chest, with its handles like a pair of rope earrings. Thirdly, the unchangeable shop for the sale of literature that has been left behind. Here, Dr. Faustus was still going down to very red and yellow perdition, under the superintendence of three green personages of a scaly humour, with excrescential serpents growing out of their blade-bones. Here, the Golden Dreamer, and the Norwood Fortune Teller, were still on sale at sixpence each, with instructions for making the dumb cake, and reading destinies in tea-cups, and with a picture of a young woman with a high waist lying on a sofa in an attitude so uncomfortable as almost to account for her dreaming at one and the same time of a conflagration, a shipwreck, an earthquake, a skeleton, a church-porch, lightning, funerals performed, and a young man in a bright blue coat and canary pantaloons. Here, were Little Warblers and Fairburn's Comic Songsters. Here, too, were ballads on the old ballad paper and in the old confusion of types; with an old man in a cocked hat, and an arm-chair, for the illustration to Will Watch the bold Smuggler; and the Friar of Orders Grey, represented by a little girl in a hoop, with a ship in the distance. All these as of yore, when they were infinite delights to me!

It took me so long fully to relish these many enjoyments, that I had not more than an hour before bedtime to devote to Madame Roland. We got on admirably together on the subject of her convent education, and I rose next morning with the full conviction that the day for the great chapter was at last arrived.

It had fallen calm, however, in the night, and as I sat at breakfast I blushed to remember that I had not yet been on the Downs. I a walker, and not yet on the Downs! Really, on so quiet and bright a morning this must be set right. As an essential part of the Whole Duty of Man, therefore, I left the chapter to itself—for the present—and went on the Downs. They were wonderfully green and beautiful, and gave me a good deal to do. When I had done with the free air and the view, I had to go down into the valley and look after the hops (which I know nothing about), and to be equally solicitous as to the cherry orchards. Then I took it on myself to cross-examine a tramping family in black (mother alleged, I have no doubt by herself in person, to have died last week), and to accompany eighteenpence which pro-

duced a great effect, with moral admonitions which produced none at all. Finally, it was late in the afternoon before I got back to the unprecedented chapter, and then I determined that it was out of the season, as the place was, and put it away.

I went at night to the benefit of Mrs. B. Wedgington at the Theatre, who had placarded the town with the admonition, "DON'T FORGET IT!" I made the house, according to my calculation, four and ninepence to begin with, and it may have warmed up, in the course of the evening, to half-a-sovereign. There was nothing to offend any one,—the good Mr. Baines of Leeds excepted. Mrs. B. Wedgington sang to a grand piano. Mr. B. Wedgington did the like, and also took off his coat, tucked up his trousers, and danced in clogs. Master B. Wedgington, aged ten months, was nursed by a shivering young person in the boxes, and the eye of Mrs. B. Wedgington wandered that way more than once. Peace be with all the Wedgingtons from A to Z. May they find themselves in the Season somewhere!

THE MOFUSSIL.

A FEW years since I had, in common with most of her Majesty's subjects, a vague and unsatisfactory idea as to the true signification, locality, and extent of the Mofussil. This oriental word had become somehow so mixed up in my mind with the Great Mogul, the Sunderbunds, the Taj Mehal, and the Shastres, that I could not for the life of me have said whether it was a person, a place, a thing, or a book. On my arrival in Calcutta I heard a great deal about Mofussil men, Mofussil law, and Mofussil life, and I was not indisposed to believe that it was the Bengal term for Mussulmen. At length, to my great relief I learnt that the East Indigo Railway, on the staff of which I had come out, ran through the Mofussil, and that I must be prepared to start off to the locality in question at a day's notice. The truth thus oozed out. The word Mofussil was applied generally to the country, in contradistinction to the cities and towns of India. I was therefore destined for the Mofussil of Bengal, and was not long in obtaining an insight into the peculiarities of life in the Indian provinces.

I joined the Rajmahal branch of the East Indigo Railway, full of great expectations of what the iron road was to do for the country in an incredible short space of time; not forgetting how anxious the "court" in Leadenhall Street professed to be that no time should be lost in developing the resources of that most magnificent country, according to Despatch Number Twenty-five thousand six hundred and thirty-seven.

I was assured by many friends in Calcutta that the Mofussil was the jolliest place in the world for a young fellow, and that the Mofussil men were the most jovial, the happiest

dogs to be found anywhere. I was not disappointed. It proved a delightful place, where one could do just as much work as one pleased without fear of being called to account. Like all Griffins, I at first determined to go a-head with my business, and push on the railway.

The line was completed the entire distance from Calcutta to my station; where an ugly swamp, of no great size, stood in the way, and cut it off from another fifty miles of rail beyond to the north, and which could not be used until my swamp should be drained. An application to the East Indigo government for one of the small steam-engines from their stores to drain this swamp had gone in three years before, had been repeated at annual intervals, but had remained unnoticed; owing, it was supposed to the Burmese war, in the first instance, and afterwards to the conversion of the five-per-cent. government paper. For the want of this small engine the railway, already constructed over a large tract of the Mofussil, could not be used.

I resolved to overcome this difficulty, and accordingly, in all the vigour of verdant Griffinism, penned an application to the proper department on the subject of the small steam-engine, which thus stopped the way of the East Indigo Railway. I handed the epistle to my neighbour, Mr. Deputy Collector Mangle-Worzell, the son of a director, and the representative of the government in our district, though only twenty-two years of age. Young Mangle-Worzell was a capital fellow, and a good friend of mine; so that I was not a little disappointed to find that he thrust my document amongst a heap of others, and told me that it should take its turn with the rest—that is to say, in about eighteen months!

It was in vain I urged the great importance of the matter; my friend was obstinately cool and resolved. He was not only deputy-collector, but assistant magistrate, poor-master, deputy-surveyor, and commissioner of roads and public works for a district as large as Scotland, with a population of several millions, and could not be expected to move along very fast.

"Besides," added Mangle-Worzell, junior, "you'll do yourself no good by bothering the government about swamps and steam-engines." I called his attention to the contents of Despatch Number Twenty-five thousand six hundred and thirty-seven, in which all collectors and their deputies were enjoined to aid the railway engineers to the utmost of their ability. "True," added my friend, "that certainly was the substance of a despatch from the Court of Directors, and it will read remarkably well in the next East Indigo Blue-book. But it happened that that despatch was accompanied by a 'private and confidential' one of a precisely opposite character."

I was astounded; but I remember having

heard that statesmen carried on the chief work of government by means of private notes which are never placed on official record. "Why," continued young Mangle-Worzell, "when I first came into the Mofussil I was as busy as you are, but very soon had a hint from Calcutta to the effect that if I wished for promotion I must keep things quiet and not trouble the government with new ideas and schemes. I have done so. My work is sadly in arrears, but I have given the big folks no trouble, and in a few months I expect a good move to Assam on double my present salary."

I dined with the deputy collector that day; and, before going home, he convinced me of the utter hopelessness of moving the government. They wrote pretty despatches to please the public, but secretly opposed all real progress, knowing well how fatal to misgovernment railways would be in the Mofussil. Why how would it be possible to conceal the real state of things if people from England could travel through India as easily as to Yorkshire? Railway communication would give far too much trouble to East Indigo officials to be tolerated by them one day sooner than it can by any possibility, or any extent of neglect, be postponed. The swamp remains to this day. The engine that might have drained it is rusting in the government stores, and the railway is still a disjointed affair,—a true type of official progress in the Mofussil.

Amongst my many friends, official and non-official, in this part of the country, is Mr. Slasher, manager of the Bengal Mineral Company, as knowing a hand, and as daring and successful in Mofussil practices, as any in the presidency. Bengalees are proverbial for their acute cunning and sharp practice; but not one amongst the lively practitioners of the Mofussil courts are anything like a match for the mineral manager. Thoroughly versed in the intricacies of Company's Law, and quite experienced in the chicanery of official subordinates, and the ignorant blunderings of Company's magistrates, Mr. Slasher snaps his fingers at one, and sets the other at open defiance. He can do this with perfect impunity, for he is more powerful for fifty miles around than the Governor-general. He can levy black-mail, and often does so, on the pig-headed officials when they thwart him, which is pretty frequently.

It is the fashion amongst East Indigo civil servants, high and low, to look upon planters, merchants, and managers, as impertinent interlopers; men who have no business in India; who come between the wind and their nobility, and who must accordingly be scouted, frowned on, thwarted, bullied, and put down, whenever opportunity offers. Indeed Indian civilians of high rank have, at various times, officially recorded their opinion that the free ingress of Europeans to British India would be dangerous to the peace and

security of that empire ;* and, although this opinion cannot now be avowed, the principle is still admitted and acted upon to the fullest extent. During the last fifty years, English settlers have suffered much from Company's beardless magistrates, or collectors scarcely out of their 'teens. But long years have done much to sear the consciences of Indigo planters and others, and have raised up amongst the Mofussilites a race of Slashers, who repay the government in kind.

The upper and lower provinces of Bengal have an extent of three hundred thousand square miles, with a population of about eighty millions. The judicial affairs of this vast country being entrusted to about sixty Company's judges and magistrates, and some few scores of uncovenanted and native magnates, it must be obvious that a very little laxity must render the administration of justice a farce,—an impossibility.

For a long time Mr. Slasher met the East Indigo judicials on their own ground. Latterly, however, he has changed his tactics, and now stands on the defensive within his own territories. The course of a Mofussil suit would be pretty much as follows: A Zemindar, or Hindoo landholder, is desirous of decoying the ryots of a certain village held in rent by Slasher on behalf of the Mineral Company. The former pays the ryots money to favour his suit, and they refuse to work for the latter. Slasher lays an action, and pays into the hands of his native lawyer a round sum in rupees for secret services, without which defeat would be certain, and with which success may not be quite assured. Some of the Zemindar's most active partisans are carried off and heard no more of, whilst Slasher loses two of his best hands in an affray. The Zemindar proves by means of forged papers that Slasher's claim to the ryots' services had long since expired. Slasher proves by documents of equal authenticity that they had, at a later date, made themselves over to him. Nevertheless, Slasher is cast, after a delay of many months.

Finding his antagonist the Zemindar, not content with making free use of the disputed ryots, but persisting in attempting other encroachments, Slasher got together a strong body of his retainers, amongst whom were many Santhals, and proceeded to the village, taking possession of his enemy's quarters, and of such stores, implements, pigs, and elderly ryots as had been left behind in the confusion of a precipitate flight. The ryots having made off to the jungle, and it being more than probable that the enemy would return in great force, the mineral manager secured as many pigs and as much rice as he cared for, and then, despite the supplications of the old folks, set fire to the village and made off with his booty, leaving behind him a sad lesson to both Zemindar and ryots.

Impunity has emboldened Slasher to such a degree, that he now sets all officials at open defiance. A warrant is served on him by a peon of the adjacent court: he tears the paper into shreds before the frightened messenger; and, as a warning to all such gentry for the future, orders his burkundasses to administer three dozen lashes on his shoulders. Of course the mineral manager is served with no more warrants.

It was not long since that the darogah, or police-superintendent of the district, levied tolls from all the boats passing downward towards Calcutta; detaining them until the black-mail was paid. Slasher knew that complaint would be in vain from any one, but especially from him; so he resolved to take the remedy in his own hands. He despatched one of his own boats well manned and armed down the river. The usual fee was demanded and refused. To enforce payment, the unsuspecting darogah went on board, and was at once seized, bound hand and foot, and conveyed to the stern manager, who forthwith had him tied up before several hundred of his people, and caused to be administered to him a lesson similar to that bestowed on the magistrate's peon; much to the delight of the assembled villagers, who appear to be born with an instinctive dread and hatred of all police authorities in the Mofussil.

Slasher's power throughout the Rainy-grainge district is something extraordinary: it borders on the marvellous, and one needs not a little faith to believe in its omnipotence. Any ordinary dacoity, assault, or murder, is pretty certain to go undetected. But so sure as any offence or crime is perpetrated within the immediate range of the mineral settlements, so sure are my friend's burkundasses or constables to be in full scent within a dozen hours. No crime goes unpunished about him; and, as a consequence, there is very little crime. To be sure, his proceedings are not strictly legal; but they have the great merit of being extremely efficacious.

Not the least singular part of this state of things in our district is, that villagers having disputes and complaints amongst themselves, always carry their cases before Slasher; who devotes two hours daily to the hearing of these voluntary pleadings, much to the satisfaction of all concerned, who know perfectly well the hopelessness of resorting to any of the Mofussil courts for justice. I cannot give a better idea of Slasher's daring Mofussil character—a character that has been moulded by circumstances into its present shape—than by saying that when the Santhal rebellion was defying all the efforts of our military, he wrote to the Bengal authorities, offering to put an end to the rising in a fortnight, provided government would supply him with a thousand stand of arms and ammunition, and ask no questions. The autho-

* Papers relating to the Settlement of Europeans in India, pp. 12-22.

rities of course declined, and the Santhals, although quiet for the moment, are yet unsubdued. Those who know the mineral manager will believe that he would have done what he undertook.

Whatever one may find to condemn in Slasher's proceedings, or in those of the many Indigo planters of the Mofussil, may be fairly laid at the door of the government. The Lynch law, the lattists, or affrays respecting boundaries of estates, in which many lives have been lost by planters and Zemindars, the dacoity of Mofussil, are all attributable to the utter inefficiency of the service, and the rottenness and iniquity of the police. And what is the Santhal rebellion, but a huge lattist springing from the same causes! The Indigo planter, knowing full well the hopelessness of a recourse to law, falls back on brute force, and sends forth his lattists armed with clubs to enforce his case against his neighbour, whilst he himself remains quietly at home. The Santhals have done no more; excepting that they went forth themselves and shared the danger.

The spinners of Manchester and many of our merchant-princes in the old country have, for the last quarter of a century, puzzled themselves to account for the utter failure of all attempts to improve the cotton culture of British India. Men are equally at a loss to know how it is that India does not produce flax and other fibres so much needed at home? and why—whilst all other countries have moved so fast in the great race of social and industrial progress—India alone has remained all but stationary? I will tell those gentlemen how it is. So long as the courts of the Mofussil are courts of iniquity; so long as capitalists can find no protection, no security for their investments—so long will India remain what it was, and worse than what it was, when Druids cut mistletoe at Stonehenge, and Britons painted their skins a dainty blue.

I write advisedly when I say that, if in one of the great and fearful struggles of the element with which this country is sometimes visited, the earth should open and swallow every judge, magistrate, moon-siff, magistrate's clerk, interpreter, and policeman throughout the length and breadth of the land, India might hope for better days, and merchant, and planter, Zemindar and ryot might fall on their knees and put forth their thanks for the mighty and happy deliverance. Here and there a good man and true, would no doubt be lost; but regret for him would be forgotten in the great emancipation of the people.

CHIP.

THE FAIRY PUFF-PUFF.

I BEG to acknowledge, in this age of plagiarism, that the word Puff-puff, which I now apply to a train or a railway, is bor-

rowed from my eldest daughter, a lexicographeress, eighteen months of age. To her, a yellow cow is not only a yellow cow, and nothing more, but a moo-cow; a horse is a gee-horse, and a cat is a puss-cat; and when she says papa, she has a difficulty in stopping herself at any particular syllable, and bursts into papapapapapap, as though intense pleonasm were the best proof of filial affection. I use the word fairy advisedly, as referring to a line of railway of a graceful and exquisite character, taking her course, whatever be the obstacles, in the wilfullest but prettiest possible manner, through the fairy-land of South Devon, and without, as I should certainly imagine, the faintest hope of remuneration. If there happens to be a flower-show in her neighbourhood, or an archery-meeting, or fireworks, or a regatta (a regatta is the very thing for her) she gets quite a quantity of passengers sometimes; and there is, I believe, some nominal value attached to their tickets; but as for the Fairy Puff-puff taking gold or silver for the transaction, it must be simply put out of the question. Her shareholders have their reward in other ways, no doubt:—in the satisfaction arising from benevolence, and in the calm approval of the first-class passengers; but not in pecuniary profit. There is just such another bit of rail in the glorious north; "the Line of Beauty" it is called by the chairman of directors; where the neat little guard cries "Off!" (as in a child's foot-race) and down we go, without an engine, Youth in the Van and Pleasure at the Brake—past town and castle, farm and upland, church and river,—to the greenest valleys in the world, and the fairest lakes.

Such flowers as these I have myself discovered in the wilderness of Bradshaw; and there are, doubtless, more than they; but, to my mind, the Fairy Puff-puff beats them still. Along her line, at every station, elegant and lofty towers have been built, with nothing a-top of them, at an expense of more than twelve thousand pounds a-piece, and merely to throw a charm over the landscape. Now and then a carpet-bag is lowered into the luggage-box, or a hair trunk (camels' hair) laid softly within for a travelling artist, with nature for his guide; and there a young invalid in search of roses for her cheeks, may join us; but there is no noise, no bustle, no confusion. By the bank of the winding river (she loves rivers) glides the Fairy Puff-puff, where the barges are lazily drifting, and the swan peers forth from her nest; where the fisherman waits with the casting-net over his shoulder, warily, in the shadow of the far-spanning bridge; where the song and the laugh commingle from the pleasure-boats sailing with the tide; where the eel-pots are hanging over the lasher, and the bye-stream runs swiftly to the mill. She is a virgin Fairy (courted long ago in vain by the

mighty Tram-tram), and there is no danger of collision, nor any such thing; but, when she nears the river-mouth, and first catches sight of the crowded harbour and limitless ocean beyond, she tears into the blood-red rock again; away into the darkness, screaming and hysterical, for a few minutes, and then getting quieter and quieter, as she remembers the strong breakwaters, how safe they are, she ventures out again under the heavens, and scarce an arm's length from the sea; so close, that on the pathway between her and it, and where the seats that lovers love are let into the tiny wall; she can hear their whispered tones quite clearly, and even the suspicion of a kiss. She hardly breathes for fear of disturbing them; and perhaps, also, for fear of our all taking a salt-water bath together through the generosity, or "giving," of the chalk-cliff; which has happened once or twice already: till suddenly, from out the deep, there looms at her (as if in exorcism) a rock shaped like a clergyman, and the frightened Fairy tunnels through the cliff again at speed.

So we pass on, from one pleasant resting spot to another; stations with one side open to the sands, where there are more people honey-mooning; where tiny children dig their little mounds to keep the tide out, with wooden spades; where the mighty seine-nets are narrowing slowly to a pleasant music, or where the crowd collects around the haul; and where the encumbered maidens are laughing and rolling in the waves. On the other side are pretty watering-places, with a rill, perhaps, flowing a-down the very middle of their lawns; whose natural productions, flowers and strawberries, are sold—or given away, most likely—on the platform. Now by another river-brink, a broad and deep one, where the steamer on the waters pants with the Fairy Puff-puff side by side, and the merchant-ships sail to and from the white port and its mouth; where the harbour-bar is hidden by the flowing tide, or is landed at ebb, a prey to sand and eelers; where the bare-legged shrimp-catchers are pushing their nets before them, as though they held a plough; where, at the village opposite, there carries a fleet of yachts, for the gentry of the south to take their pleasure in at sea, when weary of fairy land. Next, by a lovely pleasure-house, and through a stately park, where the lofty oaks and elms stand up between us and the sun; where the herds of deer, with their swift stealthy bite, and keen eyes cast behind them, scarce regard the Fairy Puff-puff, grown their so familiar friend; and, so, through apple orchards and green fields, to the old cathedral town upon the hill. It is here that our sole danger lies. The mighty Tram-tram here lays down his gauge, and threatens to bear us whithersoever he will—eastward, to haunts of money-making ghouls. But the Fairy Puff-puff strikes

off northward, virgin still, and carries us amongst quite other scenes, far from the ocean and the tidal rivers of the hollowed rocks. It is an old-world country altogether. The villages through which we pass were, in the old time, towns—the hamlets, villages. "Leighford was a market-town when London was a fuzzy down," goes the proverb. So lately as the year seventeen hundred, even, "it had pre-eminence for the fynest sorts of karsies;" and for bishops of its own (of the fynest description also, doubtless,) up to the ninth century, when it began to decline. It never quite got over the death of King Edgar, who seems to have been to Leighford what George the Magnificent was to Bright-helmstone. There were forty miles of beautiful valley then as now. The stream came from the moorland, and ran from end to end of it, the same; singing that very song; and the woods waved just as greenly; for its little towns are all named after one or other, save those more favoured ones whom the blessed saints have christened after themselves. In almost every parish stands some sacred ruin; which, from its little eminence, looks down in a grey sadness, and sometimes in a blood-red indignation too, upon the Fairy Puff-puff and her train that go rejoicing by. "What use to lay bad spirits under bann, and not to have the power to blast this shrieking demon?" mutters, or seems to mutter, the holy patron.

Now we stop to look upon an ivied church embosomed among trees; now, on a wayside cross that once was market-place; and now we linger by the margin of the stream, to watch the angler at his pleasant toil. We follow every winding like a towing-path, and might ourselves be fishing from the open window, except when some graceful bridge—constructed, as it seems, to carry grasshoppers—conducts to the opposite bank, when we might fish from the other. I am sure the Fairy Puff-puff, if we hooked a trout, would put the break on, just to let us play him. What mighty masses of foliage! Cloud on cloud are heaped upon this bank. How the rich land undulates on that in folds of green, that shall be golden grain! How gladly the waters part to left and right, to let the little isles appear! How the freshets sparkle and leap beside them in the sun! How dreamily are the cattle drinking and thinking as they stand knee-deep in the brown pool under the May thorn!

Our passengers are almost solely lovers of Nature, in search of her inmost haunts; save a few yeomen of the country, whose pleasant farms we pass low down in leafy dells, amidst the pastures, or on a height amongst the infant corn; and market-women, with fresh red faces and bright eyes, with baskets on their arms, of eggs and butter, covered with cloths of snow. The guards are chosen for their gentleness, and pat the children's cheeks that lean out of the windows, or blow their

whistles for their baby joys. And so, by strongholds of King Athelstane, and manors of John of Gaunt, we reach the quaint old town that is, alas, our journey's end; and, never rising or falling an inch from the perfect level, never passing through a cutting or crossing a barren tract, without a glance at anything unsightly, without a sound that is not melodious, the Fairy Puff-puff goes.

THE OMNIBUS REVOLUTION.

At last, M. Ledru Rollin is justified, and England is in her décadence. I foresaw it, I prophesied it, five years since; * so did Sir Francis Head; so did Mrs. Grundy. The French, whose "coming" (like that of the celebrated family of Campbells, and the anxiously-expected man, who is to keep his long-deferred appointment with the Hour) are come at last. Revolutionarily, it need scarcely be said. They have a committee of public safety sitting at four hundred and fifty-four, West Strand. They have already an army of upwards of one thousand men; they have four thousand horses, an abundantly supplied commissariat, four hundred (omnibus) fourgons, and they have already succeeded in exacting a weekly tribute from the metropolitan public alone of something very like four thousand pounds; and they have a military chest or capital stock of eight hundred thousand. The Revolution—a vehicular one—has broken out. The Atlases are in anarchy, the Swiss Cottage sacked, the Elephant and Castle beleaguered, and the Tricolor of France waves over the field of Waterloo (—Busses).

These things have been seen by me, in the flesh. I saw the conspirators in conclave some time since; I inspected the prize models of their anarchical carriages. I afterwards heard seditious statistics, and administrative treason from Sir CUSACK RONEY; and, finally, I heard a stout traitor (who, previous to his renunciation of his allegiance and accession to the cause of Jacobinism, had been one of the most extensive omnibus proprietors of London) propose, in a neat speech, "the 'elth of the osses," and prosperity to the Franco-English company, through whose exertions the whole omnibus system of the empire was to be upset, disrupted, and revolutionised.

This company (three-fourths of whose capital being French, suggested my little preliminary outburst of patriotism) having offered a prize of one hundred pounds for the best model of an omnibus for use in London streets—strength, lightness, economy of space, combined with sufficiency of accommodation, together with some elegance in design, being the chief points insisted on—some fifty models and drawings having been sent in for competition; judges having been appointed, in

the persons of Mr. Godwin, the editor of the Builder; Mr. Manby, the engineer; Mr. Wright, the well-known Birmingham coach-builder; and as many of the representatives of the press as could be got together, and persuaded to forego their dearly-loved Saturday half-holiday, having been impanelled as a sort of unsworn jury.

Straying that way in the ceaseless going to-and-fro, and walking up and down on the earth, in which a conscientious Household Words painter must necessarily pass his existence (he has no holidays, dear reader; and his very Sundays are given to speculations as to how the Sabbath should most cheerfully and rationally be spent), I found myself ascending an ornate iron corkscrew, or geometrical staircase, at whose summit I found the chamber of models. I fancied, at first, that I had mistaken my way, and wandered into the adjacent Lowther Arcade—for the tables were crowded with such delicate little toy omnibuses of tin, pasteboard, and wood, so spruce with paint, varnish, gilding, velvet cushions, and variegated flags, that there would have been death to the pocket in bringing one of the more youthful shareholders in life's company there (preference shares they hold, and little do they care for calls), and a revolution in the nursery had I smuggled away one of the models in my pocket, and brought it home to Mrs. Penn. But some working drawings on the wall, with hard-headed measurements and sectional plans, soon convinced me that I had to do with the realities of locomotion, and not with playthings; and I devoted myself to a careful examination of the results of the skill and imagination of the competitive carriage builders.

There were omnibuses of all shapes and varieties of design. Some had single, some double doors; some had seats placed longitudinally, some crosswise; some were straight, some curved. There were seats isolated by arm-rests, like the stalls at a theatre. There were numerous modes of disposal for the seats on the roof—one being a boldly-conceived notion of a circular aperture in the roof, combining the properties of the fly-trap and the pump-sucker, by means of which an inside passenger might become an outside one, ascending by a flying staircase let down for the purpose. There was a wonderful double-linked, octagonal affair, which a cynic near me (there are cynics, even in the fourth estate) declared to be a hybrid between a washing-tub and a prisoners' van. There were carriages with concave floors, with skylights, with dead-eyes, with coach-boxes on pivots, with staircases, with balconies, with turnstiles (and numerous other applications of the tell-tale principle), with any number of wheels, with telescopic contrivances of waterproof material removable at pleasure, for sheltering the passengers in wet weather, with lamp improvements, spring improve-

* See the Foreign and Great Invasions, vol. iv., p. 60, and vol. v., p. 69.

ments, axle improvements, and knife and monkeyboard improvements. The imagination of Long Acre had in fact run riot in devising vehicular novelties; and there were models in design as eccentric as that strange prodigy, invented and patented by the Polish sage, with the unpronounceable name, which suddenly appeared in the streets a few months back, and wagged and nodded its bizarre head for a brief season on the macadam. Where did it go to? Where is it now—Mr. Somethingowsky's omnibus, with its uncouth proportions and its arrangements in little isolated stalls and doors, reminding one distressingly of a pawnbroker's shop turned inside out? It is gone where the old coaches go! Does it slumber in the same coach-house of oblivion as the Car of Juggernaut, Romeo Coates's cockle-shell, our grandfathers' postchaises, Mr. Thurtell's gig, and the sledge on which criminals used to be drawn to execution? I should like to see Somethingowsky's omnibus again. It must be haunted, by this time, for sure.

On a careful survey of all these models, it did not, I am advised, appear to the judges to whom the award was entrusted, that any one vehicle in particular offered such special features of novelty in design or increase in convenience, to warrant the immediate construction of a class of omnibuses for public use on its plan. An award of the stated premium for the best design—as a design—has however been made. If it be found suitable to all present requirements, it is understood that it will be at once adopted by the Revolutionary Company; if not, they will take from it what is best in detail and arrangement, and seek for further improvement at any cost. I must do, however, the ingenious body of modellers whose works I witnessed, the justice to confess, that I did not see any one model of an omnibus among the fifty exhibited, in which the trifling requirement of a door had been omitted, or the insignificant desideratum of wheels accidentally left out; nor were there any carriages without seats or windows. Such or analogous errors in construction are understood to fall within the peculiar province and prerogative of the architects of houses of parliament, clock towers, churches and theatres.

It is apparent, nevertheless, that the perfection of omnibusality is yet to be sought for. "We want," say those who have made it their duty and interest to study the locomotive requirements of the public, "a vehicle weighing not more than twenty hundred weight." A ton is surely a heavy load enough for two horses to draw; when a full weight of passengers are added. "Our omnibus must be strong enough to bear the wear and tear of the streets, and the jerks of constant starting and pulling up; and it must be light enough, when either full or empty, not to overpower or strain the horses. We want, specially, a facility of ingress and egress: the inside pas-

senger must be enabled to pass to his seat, or leave it, without disturbing his fellow-travellers. We wish to render things of the past all the corn-crushing, rib-bruising, boot-soiling, skirt-tearing, eye- (by umbrella ferule) endangering, temper-exacerbating and grumbling, to which the entrance and exit of an omnibus passenger ordinarily gives rise. Each passenger, having the full sixteen inches to which the act of parliament entitles him, we wish yet to study the variation of breadth of beam in omnibus-using human nature—to make allowances for the lean Cassius and the portly Lablache—for the ladies' wide-spreading skirts and the life guardsman's long legs. We do not want our passengers to be cabined, cribbed, and confined—stified and huddled up like a forger in his atrocious *voiture cellulaire*, or *La Balue* in his cage, or *Xit* in the Scavenger's Daughter. We want them to be comfortable. There are, of course, difficulties, not insurmountable, but at least puzzling, in the way of these ameliorations. A fixed separation of the seats, either by an arm or a compartment, has been found inconvenient. Its abandonment is already commencing in the first-class carriages on railways. The breadth of an omnibus, too, between the wheels, cannot easily be increased, unless by some change in the mode of padding. Iron plates have been tried, and have failed. Again, as to height; if too lofty, the omnibus catches the wind, and runs in danger of being cap-sized; if too low, it becomes at once an ambulatory Black Hole of Calcutta, or a Little Ease. Next, as to light and air. If the windows are fixed, there is too much heat; when movable, unpleasant persons (and they are by no means unfrequent travellers in omnibuses) insist on pulling the windows up and down, distribute colds, catarrhs, stiff necks, and *tic-doloureux* among their companions, and play the very Doctor Reid in the way of ventilation. We want, too, for the outside passenger, equal comfort and convenience: an easy and ready step for the foot; a hold for the hand firm in ascending; while in dismounting there should be nothing in the way to prevent the quick descent. Hence, the light iron ladder, which would be of so much assistance in making one's way to the roof, or knifeboard, as it is popularly though inelegantly termed, is discarded as a vicious barker of the shins of those coming down; while the handrail at the top, if raised high enough to afford security from falling, is a serious obstruction to getting off. We seek further many further improvements as regard the carriage, the perch, the rocker, the locking apparatus, and many other points of detail, too purely technical to be understood by the general public, but not the less indispensable to their comfort and safety; and, till we have perfected and constructed vehicles uniting all the available elements of this proposed perfectibility, you must be con-

tent with the present class of omnibuses—the same carriages, it is true, but horsed, driven, conducted, and kept in repair, and with such temporary constructive improvements as are practicable without impeding the public service—under a better and a stronger system, and the whole under the control of a public and responsible company, instead of a private and irresponsible proprietor.

To this the public make answer, "Certainly we will be contented with the present vehicles till superior ones are built; but allow us to state a few little items of which we stand in need, and which can be conceded to us without delay. We want a clean omnibus. We object to the straw that is either musty or reeking with umbrella droppings. We protest against the fleas with which the cushions are sometimes infested. We denounce the abominable odour exhaled by those cushions and by the padded walls. Railway carriages don't smell so. We will not have that filthy, glimmering, spluttering lamp at night, which often goes out in the middle of the journey, and whose horrible smell makes the omnibus akin to an Esquimaux kraal in blubber-boiling time. We do not want to be either hustled into an omnibus like a pickpocket en route for Coldbathfields, or shot out of it like a coffin from a plague-cart. We do not like the door being continually opened and shut at the sweet will of the conductor, when he takes it into his head that an old lady a hundred and fifty yards off is making telegraphic signs to him with a view of going to Paddington. We do not want our wives' dresses to be shut in the said door, or our fingers jammed in it, or our shins bruised by the iron rod that runs across it transversely. We want some better mode of communication with the conductor than the ordinary poke in his ribs with the walkingstick, or the grapple of his coat skirt, or the friendly pinch of his great-coated arm. We think, too, that there might be a better telegraphical system established between the driver and conductor than the present familiar, "Hi, Bill, 'old 'ard!" We do not wish—being inside passengers—to have our vision obscured, and our faces (if we are next the door) bruised by the descending boots of passengers on the roof; or, sitting thereon, we do not wish to be precipitated into the street, while the boys jeer us for our clumsiness, and the driver tells us to look alive. We want a civil conductor and a good-humoured driver; and last, but not least of all, we want a moderate fare, and a table of fares outside, that we may know exactly how far we can travel, and for how much. At first sight a fixed fare, as the invariable six-sous in Paris, would appear an omnibus requirement of the first moment. A fixed tariff, indeed, seems essential to the complete development of the French system of correspondences; but when the vast extent which

London covers, the long expanse of suburban roads—say the Great North, the Camden Town, the Camberwell, the Old Kent roads—when these are taken into consideration, the denial of some modification of a sliding scale of prices seems as unjust to the public as to the company. I believe however, that it is the intention of the company to establish the Fourpenny piece as the Great Trunk fare, and that the cross fractions branching from it will be inconsiderable.

There are, at this present working, more than one million and a half omnibus passengers (taking each journey as a passenger) per annum. For their accommodation there are from eight to nine hundred omnibuses plying on different lines, and belonging to different proprietors, extensive and small, wealthy and poor. Of these eight hundred omnibuses the company have bought, and are in actual possession and use of upwards of four hundred. Each omnibus is estimated at a value of one hundred pounds. To work it ten horses are required, each horse worth from thirty to thirty-five pounds. Beside the actual value of each omnibus, the Times or goodwill of each (a sort of tacit monopoly of running on stated lines) has been valued and paid for at one hundred pounds; the rolling stock of the company may thus be estimated roughly, at about two hundred and twenty thousand pounds. Each omnibus earns, on an average, eighteen pounds a-week, and costs, including everything—driver, conductor, feed of horses (each horse has twenty-one pound of oats and hay per diem), wear and tear, and stabling—fifteen pounds: thus giving a profit of three pounds a-week. A cheering prospect in the dividend point of view is thus offered to the shareholders, particularly when the number of omnibuses are considered, and also that the outstanding four hundred will ere long be added. It is a pity, though, that no opportunity for rigging the market offers in a speculative sense, for the shares are all bought up, paid up, and the holders are, as I have premised, French in the proportion of seventy-five per cent.

There is something humorous, but I am afraid at the same time not a little humiliating in the quiet, business-like promptitude with which our astute allies have quietly invaded us—the nation of shopkeepers; how they have noiselessly mounted our coach-boxes, assumed the whip and ribbons, and greased our wheels for us. The London omnibuses these six months past have borne no outward or visible traces of a change of proprietary or discipline: yet all this time a stealthy société en commandite, with limited liability—in the real acceptance of the term—has been day by day adding to its rolling stock—a stock which they chucklingly declare has also a permanent way laid down for it to roll upon, constructed and kept in repair at the public charge. Is not the whole

of London, indeed, one vast granite railway, provided for the omnibus locomotive, free, gratis, and for nothing?

The great principle, it will be seen, is amalgamation. This, already tried with great advantage in Paris, naturally associated the plan of fusing into one great enterprise the several associations working the omnibuses of London. By great tact and diplomacy, but with frequent and considerable difficulty, one omnibus proprietor after another was induced first to sell his stock and goodwill to the company, and subsequently, in many instances, to acquire a business interest in its welfare. The acquisition of stock has been slow and gradual; and this is why no great street-appearances have been made as yet—no bran new liveries started—no wondrous new omnibuses paraded.

Though suggested by the Parisian example, it does not seem to be the intention of the company servilely to copy the French model. The indicator, however, or dial tell-tale, is to be adopted, and will be found, I think, far superior to all the clumsy and inefficient checks in use at present. Admirable as is the French system in other respects, there are many phases of the constitution and management that could not well be acclimated here. On the other hand, we have some omnibus facilities in England that the French do not possess. Horse-keep is cheaper in England. The English omnibus is not liable, as the Parisian one, to have the annual tax to which it is subjected increased by the government or the municipality whenever the profits reach a certain per-centage on the capital. In Paris the outside fare is only half the inside fare; but in England both fares are the same, and both classes of seats are, in summer time, equally used.

It remains to be seen how the administrative tact and clear-sightedness of our shrewd allies will succeed in developing, as in organising, this colossal enterprise. It is certain, however, that a new system was imperatively needed, and that, company or no company, the whole of travelling London has been crying out for years for an omnibus revolution.

NEIGHBOUR NELLY.

I'm in love with Neighbour Nelly,
Though I know she's only ten,
While I am eight-and-forty,
And the married-est of men.
I've a wife who weighs me double;
I've three daughters, all with beaux;
I've a son with noble whiskers,
Who at me turns up his nose.

Though a Squaretoes and a Buffer,
Yet I've sunshine in my heart,
Still, I'm fond of cakes and marbles—
Can appreciate a tart.

I can love my Neighbour Nelly
Just as though I were a boy,
And could hand her plums and apples
From my depths of corduroy.

She is tall, and growing taller;
She is vigorous of limb;
(You should see her play at cricket
With her little brother Jim!)
She has eyes as blue as damsons;
She has pounds of auburn curls;
She regrets the game of leap-frog
Is prohibited to girls.

I adore my Neighbour Nelly;
I invite her in to tea,
And I let her nurse the baby,
Her delightful ways to see.
Such a darling bud of woman!
Yet, remote from any teens—
I have learnt from Neighbour Nelly
What the girl's Doll-instant means.

O to see her with the baby,
(He adores her more than I),
How she choruses his crowing,
How she hushes ev'ry cry!
How she loves to pit his dimples,
With her light forefinger, deep;
How she boasts, as one in triumph,
When she's got him off to sleep!
We must part, my Neighbour Nelly,
For the summers quickly flee.
And thy middle-aged admirer
Must, too soon, supplanted be.
Yet—as jealous as a mother,
A suspicious, canker'd churl—
I look vainly for the setting
To be worthy such a pearl.

THE NINTH OF JUNE.

IN TEN CHAPTERS. CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

FOUR months had passed away. Four months of lonely agony for the untried prisoners in Derby jail; four months of unwearied machination against them from their enemies. In this time Mr. Flip, of the Royal Chesterfield Mail, had resigned his Majesty's service, and accepted office under the proprietary of the Derby Swiftsure; some said to be oftener in the bar of the Royal George.

Considering that it was his pride always to change horses, even at those attractive stables, in one minute and three-quarters, the accomplished whip kept his foot unconscionably long on the roller-bolt, and took an aggravating time to divide the reins between his fingers on the open sunshiny day which preceded the trial of George Dornley for high treason at Derby; yet, he could not ascend his throne without a full and satisfying view of the gorgeous apparition that had flitted before him at the bar of the Royal George. He would not say how many years he had known and loved the landlady in her bardress (he had never seen her in any other), and had gone on driving through life in

hope; but now, the glimpse he had caught of the high-waisted satin pelisse with dangling buttons; and broad fur edging grandly displayed on her magnificent figure, of her dashing Leghorn bonnet that fluttered with cherry-coloured ribbons, and of her smart reticule, and her green Limerick gloves daintily confining a sprig of rosemary between her fingers, struck him with an awful sensation that he had lived a life of presumption. When he saw his rival, Mr. Vollum, handing her into an inside place, he mounted his box moodily, and drove to within one stage of Derby without opening his mouth either to speak to the "box-sent," to drink, or indeed, to disentomb it once from its shawl sepulchre.

The merry little barnmaid preferred to travel outside, with her good friend the guard, in the sunshine, and Mr. Vollum deposited her mother fussily in an inside seat; but, in his overwhelming desire to secure a place next to that lady, he tumbled over the top-boots of one of the passengers, in whose leather-cased lap he alighted.

"I suppose he's mad!" exclaimed the young man who sat opposite. Mr. Vollum frowned, and considered whether these words were indictable or not; but the speaker escaped prosecution by continuing the talk the change of horses had not interrupted:

"Nobody but a maniac could have believed himself able to sack Nottingham with a handful of rabble; and surely it is not humane to hang poor wretches because they are mad."

"Ecod! if that were the law," said the old gentleman in the corner, chuckling till he shook a sleet of hair powder over the collar of his coat, "being a physician, I should be hanging people daily."

The country gentleman rapped out an oath. "Rot it, sir! rebellion's a madness that deserves hanging; and, by the blessing of Heaven, while England remains a free and happy country, will always get it. But I don't believe any of 'em are mad; neither the Nottingham Captain, nor any of his crew; including your learned friend the Young Squire, who's to be tried to-morrow. They're sane enough, every man Jack of 'em."

"A man may be sane on every subject except one. He may be a monomaniac;" returned the young man, modestly.

"Stuff!" was the reply. "I've been a visiting justice for a quarter of a century, and I think I ought to know something about lunatics. New-fangled nonsense! A man's mad, or he isn't mad. He can't be a quarter mad, or half mad, or three parts mad, can he? As for mono-what-d'ye-call-it, nobody ever heard of such a thing when I was a boy."

"Nevertheless," said the physician, "it is very common. Why, there is a patient of mine, a lady (of course I don't mention names), who is as rational, and patient, and

clear-headed as the best of us—more so than the best of us would be, perhaps, if we were in as much trouble as she is—but who as thoroughly believes that she saw and conversed with a certain person, at a time when that certain person was ten miles away, as I believe you sit there."

Vollum pricked up his ears, and looked very hard at the doctor above his spectacles. The hanging philosopher, tired of the subject, asked, "When is this Nottingham captain fellow to be hung? On Monday?"

"I think not," answered his vis-à-vis, "not until the trial of Mr. Dornley, the remaining prisoner, is over; and that comes on as you observed, to-morrow."

"Well, he's sure to swing for it; that's one comfort," rejoined Rustic Humanity.

The younger man protested against such comfort, and the two kept up the dispute.

"As for young Dornley," roared the boisterous disputant, "Hanging's too good for him. A fellow of good blood leading poor ignorant devils into trouble, and then——"

"Stop!" said his opponent, warmly. "You are sentencing the man before he is tried. How do you know what he deserves? Perhaps he is innocent."

"Nobody would talk in that way but a radical, and a radical in disguise," exclaimed the other. "Where's your white hat?"

"I do not care who hears me," continued the person, not heeding the vulgar question, and not answering it, "and I say that I would not hang a dog upon such evidence as that which is to be brought against Young Dornley. If a certain amount of hanging be necessary for public tranquillity—a notion not too ridiculous to be entertained in high quarters—I would feed the gallows with the witnesses: not with the prisoners, but with the paid spies and suborned treason-mongers." The county magistrate, in pulling his hat over his eyes, disturbed his flaxen wig. "Knolliver, the arch-spy, was afraid to show himself at the recent trials; but he is the principal witness against Young Dornley, and they cannot do without him. If the Derby people catch him, they threaten, I'm told, to tear him limb from limb."

"It's infernal hot! Wouldn't you like the window down, ma'am?" the country squire asked, without looking round.

Mrs. Tuckey complacently assented; remarking that it was more like May than October. From this minute the leather-lunged champion of the gallows deprived his fellow-travellers of the light of his countenance (a very red light, habitually fed with ardent spirits) by looking out of window; Mr. Vollum went on talking to himself and gazing at Mrs. Tuckey over his spectacles in a tender and abstracted manner; but presently proved that she alone did not occupy his thoughts, by turning to the doctor, and saying, in an earnest under-tone, "You, of your own ocular knowledge, could not say that that gentleman was

not with the lady you have mentioned at the precise time she is so sure he was, could you?"

"No, I could not. Because I was at Bath on the ninth of last June," the physician answered; "You seem to know the lady."

"Possibly."

Mrs. Tuckey experienced very few of the attorney's attentions from that moment; for he was plunged into a whispered conversation with the doctor, whom he rightly guessed to be Dr. Bole. He stated that he was the attorney for George Dornley's defence. The crown had got nothing by using him shabbily, and giving the case for the prosecution to Battam and Ball, of Derby, his rivals, as they would see; for, having, as public officer of Nottingham, got hold of certain documents at the preliminary examination, he could impede, if not overthrow the prosecution. But there were still certain facts which he wanted to know. He could not account, for instance, for the taciturnity and utter indifference of George Dornley to the result of his trial. Dr. Bole could. Mr. and Mrs. Calder Dornley had estranged him from his young and suffering wife; from Lord Wordley, and irreparably from his father.

"You have not received a subpoena, have you?" Vollum asked.

"No. What do I know of the matter?"

"Enough," said Vollum to himself, "to upset my defence: and" (aloud) "you won't be perhaps?"

"Not if I can help it. Indeed, I expect to meet the Crookston Hall travelling-carriage at Ripley to take me on to Bath; for, while visiting the patient at Nottingham I am now coming from, I got a summons informing me of old Mr. Dornley being *in extremis*."

The attorney rubbed his hands, and stared over his spectacles at Mrs. Tuckey more abstractedly than ever; talking to himself and taking notes of his own conversation with a pencil upon a card.

The conversation was, after this pause, taken up by the barrister, who began describing a case in which he had got off a poacher, by evidence that turned out to be false. The physician exclaimed, "Surely *that* passed the bounds of professional morality!"

"Not at all," the attorney struck in; "you must remember that a barrister is bound to do the best he can for his client; and we must also remember that the barrister is not the judge. It is not for him to pronounce upon the likelihood or falsehood of the statements in his brief; all he has got to do is to stick them into the jury as hard as he can. The use of the go-between, an attorney, is, to select what facts to lay before counsel, and to decide what facts to conceal from him."

"Then the attorney is the culprit," the old gentleman persisted.

"Nothing of the sort. The attorney won't learn too much if he knows his business. Supposing a person thinks himself (many a person does) more culpable than he is."

"Surely, I should know if I had committed murder," replied the doctor.

"No, you may not," Vollum answered, quickly. "You would, of course, know whether you had killed any one or not; but you may not know whether you killed him with all the circumstances which, in the eye of the law, go to make a murder. In civil cases it constantly happens that people believe themselves to be in the wrong when they are in the right. Everything depends upon counsel."

"I only hope Mr. Dornley will be fortunate in his counsel," said the doctor.

Mr. Vollum feared not. Sergeant Penett having been suddenly taken ill, the weight of the defence would fall on the junior, Mr. Marsden, who was coming down special. Here an extraordinary phenomenon occurred—the barrister in the corner seat blushed to the ears.

"I have been," continued the attorney, "back to Nottingham to see what I could get out of the witnesses for the prosecution that might tell in our favour. This lady's daughter is one of them." Mrs. Tuckey now blushed also—a deeper colour than her ribbons. The county magistrate, still with his face out of window, turned up the collar of his coat to the very corners of his eyes.

Here the coach stopped, and the guard opened the door to announce their arrival at Ripley.

"O, Ripley, is it?" was ejaculated through the edges of the coat-collar. "Don't shut the door. I'll get out here. Good day, gentlemen! Good day, ma'am!" Tightening his hat, and bringing the flaxen wig down over his forehead, the Squire alighted, and strode into the inn without looking round.

"Well, but," intercepted the guard, showing his way-bill, "you're booked for Darby, sir."

"Very true, but I don't want to be in Darby till to-morrow. My portmanteau is in the fore-boot." The traveller then disappeared in the shadow of the inn-porch, without bestowing one instant on the extrication of his luggage from the boot, or the guard's expected half-crown from his pocket.

That sum was, however, adroitly administered by another hand. "I want," insinuated Mr. Vollum, "to have one look at your waybill: only to know the names of the passengers."

"O, you needn't look. The big fellow just got out calls himself Robert Bump-ton, Esquire; booked in London. The old gentleman in black is Doctor Bole of Matlock; and the tall chap is Mr. Marsden, a counsellor. The box-seat is Battam's clerk from Darby, in charge of witnesses for to-morrow's trial."

Before Mr. Vollum could finish the prolonged whistle this news had prompted, a carriage and four dashed up, too fast and too close to the stage coach to please the near leader, which reared and plunged in an ungovernable manner.

Mr. Flip burned to add his shot to the volley of oaths discharged by the post-boys, horse-keepers, and stable-idlers; but the melancholy state of his mind, and respect for the satin and fur inside, restrained him. At last the rackety leader was restrained also; and the coach would have started, if it had not been hailed by a servant in the rumble, asking loudly for Dr. Bole. The guard, Mr. Flip's sworn friend, in apprising the doctor of this summons, persuaded Mrs. Tuckey to join her daughter on the outside, Mr. Vollum being engaged in copying names from the way-bill. Dr. Bole was not long in getting out, and making his deferential bow at the carriage-door.

"The crisis is so imminent, that I have come myself," said Mrs. Calder Dornley. "We cannot expect to find old Mr. Dornley alive when we get to Bath. I wish it was not so far off." The lady leaned very far back in her carriage to escape public observation; to which the coming trial of George Dornley had greatly subjected the family.

"You see, Dr. Bole," she remarked, when the doctor had transferred his luggage from the stage-coach to the Crookston-Hall carriage, "the death of Mr. Dornley would be very inconvenient to us were it to happen before the trial is over. If the wretched young man is found guilty before the entail can be cut off, and while he is even in nominal possession, the property would be forfeited to the crown, and go quite out of the family." Mrs. Calder Dornley said this very calmly: not in the least like a person in dread of a near relative being hanged next week.

The good old physician looked steadfastly into Mrs. Calder's face. "His son and heir might possibly recover it upon petition," he said. The lady's round black eyeballs flashed; but she divided the words of her reply with her usual deliberation. "Just so—if he had a son."

The change of horses having been made, the carriage rolled away towards Bath.

Meanwhile, what with the delay, and the successes of his rival achieved in his own coach, Mr. Flip was in a state of mind to drive like a desperado. If the mere upsetting of the Swiftsure could bring mortal injury upon the lawyer without crumpling so much as a ribbon-end of Mrs. Tuckey's bonnet, there is no knowing what might happen; but, when Mr. Flip found that by the guard's good offices his splendid lady-love had been induced to change her place inside, for the seat outside, next to him, and that her blithe little daughter was merrily shaking her curls on the roof beside the deposed "box-seat," he became another man, and was so merciful to his beasts that, when he dawdled into the yard of the King's Arms at Derby, he was fined eleven half-crowns for being eleven minutes behind time. Nor did Mr. Vollum take the absence of his beloved landlady much

to heart; for he had a vast deal to cram Mr. Marsden with, now he knew him to be the junior who was to bear the whole brunt of Dornley's defence.

He was, however, much chagrined to find—while delicately helping the lady down the ladder at the journey's end—that her sprig of rosemary had been transferred to the button-hole of his now jolly rival.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.

It required all Mr. Flip's strength of limb and voice and all his good-nature to work his way with the blooming mother and daughter, next morning, through the surging and swerving multitude that choked up St. Mary's gate, before the Derby County Hall. Half an hour's labour had brought the little party no farther than the door of the edifice; and they would not have got even into the outer hall, but for the chance assistance of Mr. Frontis the Nottingham special constable, who used his staff and his treble voice (too weak to disturb the proceedings within) so adroitly, that his friends managed to struggle into the court time enough to hear part of the opening of the prosecuting counsel's speech. The landlady had been greatly mortified that Mr. Vollum, after promising to obtain a good place for her in the great range of temporary seats (that her daughter, being the first witness to be called, might be saved from herding with the other witnesses), had not appeared at all. The effect of this lapse on Mr. Flip's mind was, on the contrary, quite exhilarating.

Mrs. Tuckey's ribbons and furs and satins, did everything, however, to get good places. Room was involuntarily made for her and her daughter on the front seat, Flip standing respectfully beside them in the crowd. Mrs. Tuckey was extraordinarily confused; not so much by the sharp artillery of eyes discharged at her pictorial attire from every corner of the court, as from the frequent reference then being made by Serjeant Moss to her establishment at Nottingham. At first her daughter was too much amazed and absorbed to mind being constantly mentioned. The brown faces, the white wigs, and the purple vestments of the judges, amused her; the expansive presence and deep-voiced "Silence!" of the crier of the court, awed her; the haggard, callous look of her friend the prisoner, pained her; and the constant glances of his counsel (her mother's fellow-traveller) towards the door, whenever it opened; puzzled her. But presently she too was covered with blushes; for Serjeant Moss was again mentioning her in his smoothest tones. "I shall bring the barmaid before you," he was saying, wiping his forehead and balancing his bulging figure between the seat of the inner bar and the edge of the table, "to prove that the prisoner arrived at the Royal George at Nottingham on the afternoon of the day laid in the indictment—

namely, the ninth day of June last past; that that young person gave him two letters, one of which, as I am advised, contained the secret password by which the conspirators made themselves known to one another. I shall produce another witness, by the aid of whose testimony you will trace him from Nottingham, through a part of the forest, over Cinder Hill, through the Moor Green and Selstone to Alfreton (places, no doubt, gentlemen of the jury, well known to every one of you), and thence to the scene of the riot. I must, however, inform you that there was an interval of ten minutes, during which the witness I am now alluding to lost sight of the prisoner: that hiatus will be partly filled up by the landlord of the Fox at Alfreton, at whose inn the prisoner drew rein, and inquired respecting a groom. Thus, then, gentlemen of the jury, we trace him to the White Horse at Pentridge, where his co-conspirators had already assembled. The defence may probably take advantage of the mistiness of that evening and night. It may make much of the fact that the unhappy persons best able to identify the prisoner at the bar, are now lying under their respective sentences, and cannot with propriety be dragged into court to give evidence. But, gentlemen, in the face of such convincing testimony as that which I shall have the honour of bringing before you; in the face of the tumultuous transactions at the Butterley Iron Works; the shooting of the farm servant at Topham's Close; and the capture of the prisoner early the next morning, when he had almost effected his escape; in the face of such an accumulation of proof, it will be impossible to dispute the facts of this distressing case. These will not perhaps be denied; but 'motives' may be urged upon you. You may be told that this misguiding and misguided young gentleman presented himself amongst the rioters to warn and to dissuade; that he went to them in the cause of law and order. But, men in possession of passwords; men so well known to a seditious fraternity as to have cant designations conferred upon them—the Young Squire, to wit—men actually caught in the fast of rebellion (which is the most heinous form of peace-breaking) do not usually range themselves on the side of peace-making. Besides, gentlemen of the jury, motives, whether of the purest or of the basest kind, must be discarded altogether. The law says that mere presence at a riot is participation in it. The prisoner was there: present with the rebels. That is enough. I feel most sensibly, gentlemen," continued Serjeant Moss, with oily solemnity, "the dreadful position in which you are placed. I appreciate the awful responsibility which may demand the condemnation of a fellow-creature—one of your own order—to the appalling expiation of the crime of high treason. But you must not shrink from

that responsibility; this august bench must not shrink from that responsibility; I, the humble individual whose painful task it is now to address you, must not shrink from that responsibility." The learned serjeant then sat down, having wiped out, with his cambric pocket-handkerchief, the unctuous smile with which his last words to a county jury were always accompanied.

If Mrs. Tuckey had not given her daughter's skirt a parting pull, to take a pucker out of the skirt, as the damsel left her seat to ascend the witness-box, and if the maiden's dangling curls—hardly confined by her bonnet—had not obscured her face whenever she was asked a question, there would not have been so much tittering as actually arose in the court; even although she would persist in prefacing each answer with "Please, sir." She felt very unhappy when, after having told the whole truth to the first gentleman, the second gentleman—who she thought would be very kind indeed to her, as he was on her friend's side—appeared not to believe one word she had uttered. She was ready to cry when Counsellor Marsden asked her, severely, whether she was quite sure that the gentleman she gave two of the letters to, and the prisoner at the bar, was the same person.

Nothing could be more certain: her answer was confirmed by the prisoner himself; who, roused from his callousness to the proceedings, gave her a smile; and it was a smile of recognition. Mr. Marsden bit his lip, but went on, after a pause. The prisoner had arrived on horseback, had he: of what colour was the horse?

"Please, sir, it was a black horse?"

A black horse. Well, about the letters? Why, please sir, she handed over two letters in the name of Dornley, and one letter in the name of Nobble.—Would she know Mr. Nobble again if she saw him? Please, sir, yes, in a minute.—Could she remember how Mr. Dornley was dressed? Please, sir, he had on a white great coat and a white hat.

A pause. While the witness was "standing down," the prisoner leant over to whisper a word into the ear of his counsel, which sounded like a word of remonstrance; but his counsel looked towards the door, and took not the slightest notice of it.

The next witness was a long time in appearing. He had to be fetched from a hiding-place somewhere under the building. Why, the hiss of execration, too spontaneous to be suppressed, which greeted him when he answered to the name of Knottliver, sufficiently explained. Although he squared his shoulders and looked boldly round the court, the tight grasp with which he held on to the rail of the witness-box, and the twitching of his nether lip, showed that he was not so much at ease as he wished it to be supposed he was. He proved, however, what lawyers call a good witness; for practice had made

perfect. Nothing could be clearer than his narrative of the ride with the prisoner from Nottingham to Pentridge; nothing more exact than his recollection of the precise minute at which each incident of the journey took place. He detailed with studied accuracy what passed at the White Horse; what happened at Butterley; how the farm servant was murdered at Topham's Close, the prisoner being present; how he himself was captured by a horse soldier; how the prisoner at the bar was arrested in Arch Lane; and how himself was ultimately released on turning approver.

The heavy despairing look which Marsden constantly cast towards the door, left him when he began to cross-examine Mr. Knolliver. The legal mind lighted up at the prospect of reducing this burly witness to the smallest dimensions. It delighted to extract confessions of his various disguises and aliases; of having taken the name of Noble, and the character of an Eastern Delegate; of having spoken frequently at seditious meetings; of having also made himself known, on the road, as Squire Bumption, a visiting justice of twenty years' standing.—What was his profession? Nothing particular.—Was he in the pay of government? No.—Had he ever been in the pay of the government? Never—that is, no more than a councillor might be, when he received a government fee.—Had he ever worn a red waistcoat? Perhaps he had, when it was the fashion to wear red waistcoats.—But are not red waistcoats rigidly the fashion among Bow Street officers? He believed they were.—In one word, sir, are you not a paid government spy?

The Other Side interfered. The question was in outrageous excess of forensic licence; and the Court concurred. Marsden bowed and resumed—

"Now, sir, on the word of a man who may, or may not be a government spy, was the horseman, with whom you parted before you entered Alfreton, and the horseman whom you overtook after having passed through Alfreton, one and the same person?"

"He was."

"Take care, sir! You swear that?"

"I swear it, if it was the last words I have to speak."

Re-examined by Serjeant Moss: "Is that man the prisoner at the bar?"

Witness: "He is."

The prisoner uttered an involuntary expression of assent; and his counsel, seeing that it had been noted by the jury, occupied himself while one of the judges asked Mr. Knolliver a few questions, in writing on a scrap of paper which he handed to the prisoner, these words;—"If you do not leave your case entirely in my hands, I will throw up my brief."

Dornley's answer pencilled on the same

paper was: "I will *not* be defended by means of a lie."

Mr. Marsden tore the memorandum up, and said partly to himself and partly to the young coadjutor who was taking notes for him, "I *can* put a stop to this, and I will." He then examined the witness relative to the letter he had received at the bar of the Royal George; but no sort of tortuous interrogating could extract from him the writer's name. The court ruled that he was not bound to reveal it. Then came a perfect rack of questions about the letter sent in to the prisoner from the Green Boar. Had not the prisoner gone from the Royal George to that Inn? He had, to see a friend.—Had he not written a letter there? He had, to his wife.—In short, was not the letter which enticed the prisoner to the Pentridge meeting written to himself? "I decline to answer that question."

The prisoner had relapsed into his old abstraction; but Mr. Marsden roused him from it during the change of witnesses, by handing him the letter that had been directed to Mr. Noble, and which Vollum, got possession of at his preliminary examination of both prisoners' personal effects, and had never given up. He wrote on the back of it, "Here is the letter. Shall I call witnesses to prove the hand-writing?"

George Dornley read these words, and saw that the letter, to which alone he owed his present position, was in the handwriting of his own brother! He trembled from head to foot, and pressed his hand over his eyes as if to hide from himself the hideous revelation now unexpectedly made. His agitation was so manifest that one of the judges ordered him the indulgence of a chair. For some time he seemed to take no more part whatever in the trial.

The witness then in the box was the landlord of the Fox, at Alfreton. He swore that a gentleman came past his house on horseback and asked about a groom. Serjeant Moss's junior (a gentleman about sixty, named Baldy) worked very hard at this last question; but the witness had never seen a groom; nobody, as he had heard of, had seen a groom at Alfreton, about nine o'clock at night, on the ninth of June.

This was the weak point—perhaps the only weak point—of the prosecution; for it had failed, after spending hundreds of pounds, to find the servant with whom the prisoner had changed coats and horses. It failed, because none of its myrmidons had thought of seeking a soldier instead of a groom. If they had, they need have gone no further than Nottingham barracks; where, by looking up C troop of the Twelfth Hussars, they would have found Thomas Hockle under the rank and title of Lance-Corporal Haimes. Disgusted with the world, he had enlisted on the day after his master's incarceration.

Examination continued: Could not swear

that the gentleman witness spoke to was the prisoner, though witness thought he was. It was getting dark.

"Was there," asked Marsden, in cross-examination, "light enough to see the colour of the traveller's horse?"

"Oi, there war that. It war a grey horse—a'most white."

"Could you distinguish the colour of the gentleman's coat?"

"Well, no. But it was a darkish coat."

"It was not a white coat?"

"No, it warn't."

The aspect of the jury-box here changed. Instead of two rows of motionless faces, it suddenly presented several knots of shoulders and heads, that gave forth a confused buzz, in which the bar-maid's evidence, thus flatly contradicted, was mentioned. The Other Side bent down the corners of its mouth, and leaned back, throwing its pen upon the table contemptuously. Then its senior rose, and, in a confident tone, called Thomas Tanner.

Thomas Tanner swore that it was he who rode the old grey horse from Pentridge to Eastwood. It was the prisoner's horse. The prisoner, dressed in a dark coat, was the person called the Young Squire, who appeared at the meeting. He had no doubt of his identity. He'd swear to him amongst a thousand. Serjeant Moss gave the jury a sharp nod, which implied, "*that* point is settled:" whereupon the knots in the jury-box relaxed again into two rows of calm, convinced faces.

The defence put one last question to Thomas Tanner:—

"You turned approver at the trial of the so-called Nottingham Captain, did you not?" And it got a reluctant affirmative. The jury again consulted busily amongst themselves. This closed the case for the prosecution.

Marsden's lip quivered and his hand shook when, standing up to commence the defence, he looked round for Vollum. Should he ask for time, or should he go on, now that the jury seemed on the whole generously disposed? He determined to proceed. He would talk on and gain time until the witness upon whose testimony the entire defence rested, should arrive; if indeed Vollum could succeed in bringing her. He plunged into his exordium almost recklessly. He pointed out the extraordinary disadvantages under which the defence laboured; the absence of his own leader, and the consequent loss to the prisoner of the two addresses to the jury which the law mercifully allowed to persons accused of high treason. When he alluded to certain distressing passages of his client's private life; when he revealed that the gentleman at the bar had, within scarcely a year, become a husband and a bereft father; when he pictured the desolation of her who was nearest and dearest to him, the jury showed signs of emotion. He

would not, Marsden continued to say, dispute the law of the case as laid down by his learned friend the counsel for the crown; but would address himself wholly to the facts. Could they believe the oath of the witness Knolliver? Could they believe a man who assumed a variety of aliases, and whom he would prove to be a traitor and a spy? (The county gentlemen in the jury-box shook their heads and moved their elbows uneasily.) Could they believe the witness Tanner, who had turned king's evidence against the wretched persons now awaiting the execution of their dreadful sentence? And upon whose evidence did the accusation rest? Why, upon those men, and those only. Even if they could be believed, Marsden denied that they had done so much as even establish the identity of the prisoner in connecting him with the transactions of the ninth of June. Could it be credited that a man who appeared in the public road on a black mare in a white coat, could be the same individual, who, after an incredibly short interval of time, was seen on the same public road, on a white gelding in a dark coat? Could he have changed his horse and his clothes by magic?

Here the prisoner, roused by the fervour of Marsden's appeal, rose and uttered what appeared to be a protest. But the Chief Justice, leaning very far over his desk, told him, that he must either leave his case wholly in the hands of the barrister, or wholly take it out of them.

"Meantime let me ask you, Mr. Marsden," said another of the judges, "what you are going upon? Do you, or do you not, intend to set up an alibi?" His lordship merely asked the question to save the time of the court.

This was an anxious moment. Marsden must now elect either to set up a defence for the support of which the direct evidence he was waiting for had not arrived—would, perhaps, never arrive—or he must simply abandon the case to mere conjectures and probabilities. He stood nervously clenching his brief with one hand, his face turned full towards the door:

But, at this critical moment it opened. Mr. Vollum dragged, rather than supported, a lady through the crowded passage into the body of the court. Marsden fetched a long deep breath, as if an incubus had been removed from him. But the new presence in the court had an opposite effect upon the prisoner. A single shudder manifested his astonishment and despair. He exclaimed "My God!" and, sinking into the chair, buried his face within his hands, like one stricken. Mrs. Tuckey gave up her seat to the lady, who trembled from head to foot, and could not once raise her eyes from the ground to look at the prisoner.

"Yes, my lord, and gentlemen of the jury," Marsden continued, in a clear, full, almost cheerful voice, "that *is* our defence. We

plead alibi. I have nothing more to say. Our witnesses will do the rest."

Serjeant Moss looked up at Marsden, and said, with a smile, "Now, really this is too—well, we shall see."

The witness was in the box, with her head averted from the prisoner.

The words, "Speak up!" which ended the form of oath as administered by the swearing officer, seemed to be a necessary adjuration to this witness; for, surely from so fragile and trembling a form; from so pale a face, with its large, rimmed, wan eyes; from such parched, colourless lips, the sounds that were to come would be very faint and low. Yet, the first answer startled the whole assembly by its distinctness and clearness. The prisoner, when it struck upon his ear, uttered a hollow, despairing groan.

Her testimony was to the effect that, at ten o'clock on the night of the ninth of June, George Dornley, "my husband" (spoken in a louder and prouder tone), arrived at the cottage at Crookston Withers. Then the witness faltered. She was very ill at that time, she continued, but not too ill to recollect that he came; that she spoke to him, as he sat or stood beside her couch. She remembered what she said to him.

"And what," Serjeant Moss, interrogated, "did he say to you?"

She paused, and moved her eyes quickly, as if making a strong effort of memory. The question was repeated. She could not answer it, and it was not pressed; but she responded to succeeding questions readily. He was present beside her from long after nine o'clock, until—until—. Her eyes, gradually turning, as if by slow but irresistible fascination towards her husband, at length rested upon him crouching, prostrate, overwhelmed; and, frantically stretching out her arms towards him, she exclaimed "George!" and swooning, fell upon the rail of the witness-box.

The commotion occasioned by her removal from the court drowned the commencement of the prosecuting counsel's reply; which was, however, short, and not very lucid; for the last witness had overthrown all his calculations, and neutralised all his well-studied arguments.

The presiding judge, in summing up, balanced the extraordinary contradictions in the evidence without professing to reconcile them. "You may find it difficult," he said to the jury, "to unite, out of the evidence I have just read to you, the rider of the two horses and the wearer of the two coats on one person, and that person the prisoner; but it will be for you to say whether you can do so with sufficient accuracy to fix his identity. I frankly confess to you, that the evidence of the lady who was last examined (who, I am bound to state, gave her evidence with remarkable clearness so long as she could control her feelings) appears to

me to render the conflict of testimony explicable upon no other ground than that of the witness labouring under some hallucination respecting the arrival of her husband at her house, and his presence at the time, and during all the time which other witnesses have sworn that he was present elsewhere. Still, there being no evidence before us as to that, no supposition must for one moment weigh in your minds against positive evidence."

During the dead silence which reigned in the court while the jury were absent considering their verdict, the little barmaid wept in her mother's lap, and the landlady wept too; for hysterical shrieks pierced the court from the witness's room; into which Eusta Dornley had been assisted.

But there was a dead silence when the jury re-appeared, and the crier put the question—

"How say you, gentlemen of the jury, guilty or not guilty!"

Not a breath was drawn until the foreman had pronounced the words:—

"NOT GUILTY!"

CHAPTER THE NINTH.

THE morning after George Dornley's trial was not a very gloomy time in Derby, although a public execution had taken place in the town. The Nottingham Captain and some of his tithing-men had paid the terrible penalty of their belief in the glowing statements of Mr. Knolliver, and in their own ability to put down borough-mongering by force of arms, to improve trade, and to repeal taxation. So far, the plans of his majesty's ministers prospered. The dreadful lesson would, they believed, spread terror and obedience throughout the land. But George Dornley's acquittal was an untoward event. His conviction would have favoured the notion that the Strong Government of that day exercised no class favouritism, and that gentle and simple were made equally to feel the weight of its iron authority. Although the Young Squire was a local political idol, his escape from the fate which that morning overtook his fellow-prisoners did not improve public faith in even-handed justice. Everybody knew, it was argued, that Mr. George Dornley appeared at the Pentridge meeting; the jury must have known he was there; his own counsel knew it; the judges knew it; and if his wife had been the wife of a puddler or frame-work knitter, d'ye think she would have been believed? But, poor soul! what she did, she did for the best; and the best came of it: for Young Dornley was a good lad—they all knew that—and nobody could say they were not glad he was let free.

This was the general turn of talk at the bars and in the tap-rooms of the Derby public-houses; over the counters of most of the shops; in the mills and factories where holiday had not been made; and in the market-place—for the great Gallows Instruc-

tor always taught its egregious lessons on market days, when the largest number of pupils could be assembled—yet, no stranger entering the town during that day could have distinguished it from a day of pleasure. It was not extraordinary, therefore, that the landlord of the Angel and Bells close to the County Hall was embarrassed with too great a crowd of customers. He gave up serving in despair, and went on arguing vehemently about the acquitted prisoner. The claims of Lance-corporal Haimes, of the Twelfth Hussars, with a billet for himself and four comrades, were, of course, utterly disregarded. The dispute waxed warm. The landlord thumped the bar with his fist. "Wasn't I," he angrily asked, "at the trial, looking at him all the time? D'ye think I didn't know him directly he walked into this very passage?"

"Don't tell me!" answered the head clerk of Messrs. Battam and Ball, as he dug a ragged pennyworth of cheese out of a huge double Gloucester. "I don't mean to believe that a gentleman so well known about here—he and his ancestors for centuries—has got no other place to put his head into than this?—Here, a nip of Burton!"

"I say it's him and nobody else!" The landlord was very irate: "why, I'm not such a fool as not to know a man again that I'd been looking at all the morning, just because he had got a hat on. I tell you he walked in by himself, and asked, in a mournful sort of voice, if he could have a private sitting-room and a bed. You might have knocked me down with a pipe-stalk."

"Then do you mean to say he has been here all night?"

"Yes, I do—and as solitary as ever he was in gaol. There's been his lawyer and his lady here to see him a dozen times; but he won't see a soul," replied the landlord, whose ruffled veracity was now sufficiently calmed to enable him to serve his most clamorous customers.

Meanwhile, some of them were serving themselves; for the lance-corporal knew of no other way to attract attention, than to order his men to draw what beer they wanted, to drink it, and not to pay for it. While these words of command were being implicitly obeyed, he marched up-stairs; having already heard enough from the landlord to induce him to enter the first-floor sitting-room without knocking. The occupant was writing; and, having started up menacingly to resent the intrusion, found the corporal standing straight against the open door, performing a military salute; but sat down quietly when he recognised Thomas Hockle, in spite of his regimentals.

The interview was so painful that even in trying to describe it to me, the riding-master was too much affected to give a clear idea of what passed. George Dornley, utterly forsaken and hopeless, was arranging his

papers. He was totally changed. Although touched by the interest which his former groom took in him, he was almost sullen. He tried every practical method to rid himself of his presence. Tom, however, said frankly, that Mr. George was not in a state to be left to himself, and that it was his intention to keep guard over him. Dornley resented this; but not harshly; and, after a minute or two passed in deep thought, he determined to confide in the man thus far:—as he intended to go abroad, he would give his papers into Hockle's charge.

"But," said the lance-corporal, "I am going abroad myself—to India. We have got our route, and sail next Thursday."

That was of no consequence, wherever he went he could take the papers with him.

The documents had scarcely been tied up securely, before the door opened again, and Mr. Vollum presented himself with a lady. Hockle described her as thin and pale; but upright, undaunted; an unnatural brightness flashing from her eye. She cast herself towards Dornley; but he stood aloof. She trembled; and, during that short spasm, seized the back of a chair for support; for Vollum, having introduced her into the room, retired as quickly and timidly as if he had set light to a powder magazine. Hockle would also have left the room, but Dornley desired—commanded him—to remain.

"I will not be alone," he said, partly aloud, "with, with—" he hesitated, mentioned no name; did not even look at his wife. "There can," he said, louder, "be nothing for us to speak about which this person, or any person, may not hear."

"Upon this," Hockle said, in telling me this part of the story—"Mrs. George looked at me in a way that went to my very heart. It was the old look that she gave me in the dingle, when she said, 'I think we may trust him, dear George.' I guessed why Mr. George was so deadly against her:—no honest man would have liked his wife any the better for perjurying herself, even to save him. But my blood boiled against Mr. George for being so cold—so different from what he used to be. As for me, I could at that moment have laid down my life for her; perjury, or no perjury."

She spoke first; but she said very little. She said, simply, that her enemies had prevailed; that she and Mr. George were separated for ever; but that before she died (Mr. George shuddered), she *would* set herself right with him. She had done nothing—nothing (she thought a moment), no nothing which she could repent of—

At this, Mr. George looked up. He saw her standing before him, upright, brave, but not bold, looking straight upon him. Their eyes were fixed upon each other; they did not seem to breathe. She did not take her eyes from him, even when she went on to say:—"I solemnly swear it!" but

dropped them to add, "This is all. I will go now." And she would have gone; but I placed a chair in her way, so that I could gently sink her into it.

Mr. George waited a little while, and then said, "I hoped that this would not have been—I am not adamant; although trouble and desolation have driven me—" He checked himself; for tears were welling up into his wife's eyes, and tears were then to be very much dreaded. "I know that I have escaped ignominy, and that you have saved me. But an ignominious death is better than an ignominious life."

It was terrible to see her eyes move from side to side like lightning, as if thought and recollection and perplexed ideas were all battling together in her brain. Mr. George looked frightened. "I never saw a mad person," Hockle remarked to me, "but I am sure that the way she looked about—so quick and wild, and yet without seeing anything except what was going on in her mind—must be just the way people look who are not in their senses. It was awful."

Presently she spoke in an unearthly whisper. Hockle could not, he said, distinguish what she uttered; but the words conveyed to Dornley something that changed—roused him. He rose and clutched the front of his hair fiercely, as if trying to crush in his forehead. He kept on repeating the words which his wife had, I suppose, whispered: "Not dead of neglect, but stolen!" "Not dead of neglect, but stolen!" With this he went to her and took her hand tenderly; but she—who coming into the room, seemed ready to fall into his arms and pour out a torrent of love that would have swept away every trace of past grief—now appeared insensible to her husband's caress. She did not return the pressure of his hand. She smiled sweetly on him, but without recognition; the power of distinguishing him as her husband had left her.

How Dr. Bole came upon the scene at this agonising crisis, Hockle's narrative was too confused for me to understand. Perhaps, having travelled back post from Bath, with the news of old Mr. Dornley's death after having cut off the entail of the Crookstone estates (the doctor thought illegally), Vollum had met him in the street and told him where the disinherited gentleman was to be found. His whole attention was, however, absorbed by his patient. She smiled on him too; calmly, mechanically, but did not speak a word. The doctor gave me a look which told me to watch her while he took Mr. Dornley to the window.

"I have heard the manner of your acquittal," he said, in a low tone, "and can thoroughly reconcile it with your wife's truthfulness."

"God bless you, doctor!" Dornley took Bole's hand in both his own, and listened with even more eagerness than he showed, when waiting the verdict of the jury.

"You know," pursued the physician, "how her whole mind and soul were set upon your returning to her from Italy on the ninth of June. You know also her delicate condition at that time; but you do not know that, after she recovered from the shock inflicted by your non-appearance, and the event it brought on, she continued under the delusion—one of those delusions not uncommon to young mothers—that you were present, and she talked to the air as if she were talking to you; conscious of no other person's presence, not even the presence of her baby."

Dornley groaned: "How do you know all this? you—you were not present."

"No; but, as the delusion remained—lasts indeed, to this moment—I took pains to trace its origin. Your wife has remained sound and sensible on every subject, except that one conviction of your presence on the ninth of June; and I, as a medical adviser, always enjoined her never to speak of the circumstance, lest her enemies should get her pronounced insane. She as firmly believed what she swore to be true, as that I believe it is a delusion."

When the husband, on hearing this, clasped his wife in his arms, kissed her, called her by every endearing name; and when Hockle saw that it was too late, and that she was insensible to his caresses, it was more, he said, than he could bear; and, taking charge of the papers, he left the room.

That night stern military duty obliged Hockle to leave Derby; and, in less than a week, he was on the sea bound for Bombay. Another ship from another port was at the same time bearing George Dornley, alone, broken down and broken-hearted, to the West Indies, where Lord Wordley had kindly provided him with honourable banishment, on an estate of his own. Dr. Bole had strongly advised the separation from his wife, as best calculated to promote her eventual recovery; of which he spoke very confidently. She was placed in the best private asylum in the county.

Thus far the riding-master's information; the rest I learnt from other sources during a subsequent visit to Matlock-Bath.

CHAPTER THE TENTH.

ON taking possession of the Crookstone Hall estate, Calder Dornley found that his late father's profusion had considerably embarrassed it, and the first year was passed by him and his wife in schemes of parsimony for emancipating it from debt. In the second year they were rich; for Sir Bayle Stonard had died, and Stonard Abbey, with an enormous hoard of personal wealth, came into their possession. But—being rich, and feeling that all in the world they had ever hoped-for was theirs; shunning society;

owning no ties; enjoying no resources or occupations beyond those afforded by a rooted love for, and an ingenious practice of economy; having no future—life became to them a dreary penance. To each other they were indeed all in all; but the bond was rather that of partners in guilt than of partners in affection. It was less love than a worrying impulse for each other's society.

At length this sort of life became insupportable. The only mitigation of it was derived from any little good they had done, or could do. It got to be a great relief to them, that having basely intended to conceal their brother's child, they had written to George to apprise him of its existence, and to assure him that every care should be taken of it. They also administered to the wife as frequently and liberally as her unhappy state would permit.

It was not, however, until Mrs. Calder Dornley had herself lingered and sunk under an hereditary disease which had already extinguished the Stonard baronetcy, that the widower, now reduced to the condition of a second Cain—doubting the legality of his father's proceedings in barring the entail—deriving no moment of pleasure from his wealth, and hating his position—determined to repair the wrong he had done. By this time Eusta had so far recovered that, under the advice of the good old Doctor Bole, an experiment could be safely tried for her return to the world. It was at the time when emancipation was granted to the West India slaves, and George Dornley's services on Lord Wordley's plantations were no longer needed. He was, in fact, on his way to England.

Miss Pim, the latest object of Mrs. Calder's relenting good deeds, had been granted free residence in Corner Cottage. She had scrupulously preserved, not only every article of furniture, but the arrangement of it. Eusta was successfully removed from the asylum; and, for several days, fell into the routine of home duties she had been accustomed to, before the fatal ninth of June.

Dr. Bole had always dreaded the first meeting of Eusta with her son; but when on her return to the cottage she saw a fine, frank-looking boy reading at the parlour table she at once accepted him as her son; kissing him affectionately, as if they had never been parted. It would appear that she had never doubted his having been preserved to her, and her facility of creating mind-pictures, had followed him in imagination from infancy to his present stature and appearance, during the whole of her seclusion.

Years had set no mark upon her; for her malady had left her mind calm and unexcited. Except that her figure was rounder and her manner more reserved and grave, she appeared to be as young, and was, in reality, handsomer than formerly. She spoke of her husband's absence, as of something neither

strange nor inexplicable. Only she was apt to confound Italy with the West Indies.

At length Dr. Bole had the courage to allude to the events of the terrible Ninth of June. To his mortification, he found that the impression that her husband had stood beside her on that unfortunate night, seemed ineffaceable. It happened that, unless the ship was delayed, her husband would arrive very near its anniversary; and the good old physician determined to turn the coincidence to account. He wrote a letter to George Dornley, which reached him on landing; giving a full and cheering account of his wife's health, and detailing his plan for completing her cure.

On this later Ninth of June, Crookston Withers glowed with sunshine. Eusta sat at her parlour-window. The palace of the Sleeping Beauty could not have remained so exactly the same as of old, as Corner Cottage did. Eusta was again engaged in lace-making. Her longing heart again bounded with the old hope that The Expected was coming before his time; then sank with disappointment when some strange horseman passed. Dr. Bole had arranged that her son should spend that day at Crookston Hall; but that his uncle (who had, at the doctor's earnest entreaty hitherto kept from Mrs. George's sight) should call towards the end of the day. There was no Mrs. Calder left to make the dramatic personæ of the former drama complete.

Eusta received Mr. Calder Dornley as she had received her son; precisely as if their intercourse had never been broken off; but impatiently. She expressed—but not in words—that his presence was an intrusion. Nine o'clock approached. Dr. Bole, in the little kitchen—the temporary guest of dear old Miss Pim—watched the crisis with an anxiety almost insupportable. Presently a horse's canter was heard. It ceased. The door opened suddenly; some one rushed into the little parlour; there was an hysterical scream of joy; George Dornley and his wife were locked in a close, passionate embrace.

"I cannot describe to you" (it was the good old physician himself who told me this part of the story) "the anguish of dread which I felt to hear what words Mrs. George would first speak, after her emotions had subsided. It was worse than waiting to hear a sentence of life or death. Thank God, what she did say proved that the experiment had succeeded!"

"Was the old delusion thoroughly expelled?" I asked.

"Yes; or rather, it is now confused with the real meeting on this last ninth of June. George Dornley, his wife, and their son, are now travelling in Italy."

"But how comes it that Mr. Calder is still in possession of the Crookston estate?"

"George Dornley would not dispossess his

brother, and Calder now acts as his steward. When the latter nearly knocked you off Tom Hockle's horse, he was looking after some improvements he was carrying out in the estate for his brother's benefit."

HINTS FOR THE SELF-EDUCATED.

THE education of the people, though not yet what we would have it, yet now perhaps delivered from some of the more absurd prejudices that once perplexed the question, and so far aided in its progress by the wishes of the wise and good that we may reasonably hope for a complete deliverance at last, has, to a considerable extent, introduced the light of intelligence and the spirit of enterprise into the homes of many a workman and workwoman, furnishing therewithal the means of acquiring much additional happiness or wealth, if well-applied and discreetly directed. In the concrete world, however (to use a learned phrase), in which we happen to live, there is nothing nor any state of things that can be safely accepted as an unmixed benefit; and, accordingly, education itself presents phases and points of view, in which it is well even for the best instructed to be upon their guard against the well-known enemy who is continually sowing tares, even in the richest fields of human effort. Let it be granted that the merely sensual life in which our populations for so long a period exclusively indulged, and from which some portion of the masses have been with such difficulty redeemed, was encumbered with obvious evils, and defaced with many undeniable blots; yet are there likewise sundry blemishes to which the more intellectual and rational are subject, and some which even alienate sympathy, and induce an unwise exclusiveness, by which an individual may forfeit the sentiment of universal brotherhood, and incur the serious penalty that attaches to the loftier sins, such as spiritual pride, and others of the refined high moral class: a penalty too frequently paid by those who think "there never can be too much of a good thing." A few remarks on some of the phases of possible evil connected with certain stages of intellectual development may recommend themselves on the score of their obvious utility.

Intellectuality is a growth. A man is awakened to a consciousness of his ignorance, and the desire of knowledge. This is the first step; and many members of his family, perhaps all, may take it with him. But in the attainment of knowledge and its results, progress in individuals varies according to their capacity and opportunities. One frequently outstrips the other, and a sense of inequality obtains, which soon becomes increasingly painful, unless some superior interference is permitted to regulate the balance. An instance—it may be, selected

from fact, a piece of actual experience—may explain what we mean.

Our friend Amintor, now a great artist in celebrity, and without riches. He was poor and young:

The world was all before him, where to choose
His place of rest, and providence his guide.

Too early, however, he yielded to the strong necessity of loving, and married. His wife, affectionate and faithful, willingly became his co-labourer, and bore with him the burthen and the yoke of his struggling days—partook with him the fever and the fret of aspiring ambition. Well-directed energy led to fortunate results. In the course of years, Amintor has gained a competency, a respectable station in life, and connections valuable to him, either on the score of talent or fashion, or both. People of genius are his companions, and people of taste invite him to their parties of pleasure. Too late he makes the discovery, that while he has been improving his position in the world without, his wife, engrossed in domestic cares, has contracted the habits and manners of a household drudge, and, though sympathising in his pursuits, has acquired no skill in conversing on them with propriety or elegance. Much discomfort ensues. The husband is ashamed to introduce his homely partner into society; she herself even is disinclined to enter scenes for which she feels herself unqualified. The unity of their fate suffers gradual disruption; and the husband at length learns to enjoy the world alone. He looks on other female faces, and compares their bright and intelligent activity with the sober unvarying expression of his suffering and much-neglected spouse. He thinks how much happier he might have been with one of those accomplished beings who float in the circles to which he has been at last admitted. The state of his feelings is soon perceived at his own fireside. An air of abstraction, a pervading discontent, a want of confidence only too surely reveal and beget a sense of habitual infelicity. The wife of his youth, the partner of his early efforts, the careful minister of his in-door economy, to which no small portion of his out-door prosperity was owing, is no longer regarded with the same affectionate respect. He feels, he thinks, he says—that she is neither young enough, nor handsome enough, nor accomplished enough for him in his present position. And when she weeps at the unkind remark, he affects to wonder and indulges in impatience.

This, it may be objected, is an extreme case; but it may be safely accepted as what Lord Bacon calls a prerogative instance, and should, as such, startle attention to the principle. Amintor should have cultivated as a moral duty the habit of linking the past to the present, and encouraged his love to ripen into esteem and gratitude. He should have been careful that a purification of the mind accompanied its intellectual advances, and

have supplied with a moral sentiment the hiatus—the intellectual and social chasm—that was growing between his own and his wife's mental condition. Perhaps, too, some pains on his own part might have made it much less, or even prevented it altogether. He might, from time to time, have communicated to her what he had himself acquired, and thus, by enabling her to advance with him, preserved more closely the original relation. The same remark may apply where the disruption of family-bonds, or old acquaintance ensues from similar causes, and pride and shame change places, and ancient affections are crushed beneath the Juggernaut wheels of ambition, and a chasm is dug between hearts once united in friendship. Intellectual eminence is often gained at the expense of socialities; indeed it naturally separates itself from lower developments and laudably seeks union with the higher; the circle narrows as the spire ascends and the apex represents a single unit. Solitude is the destiny of the man who rises too far above his fellows; and who, in aiming at intellectual perfection, outsoars companionship. Were he happy in this solitude, we might leave him to enjoy it, but he complains of his isolation, and therefore we seek its remedy, or its prevention.

This remedy we have already suggested—but it requires to be stated in detail. The first tendencies to isolation should be especially guarded against. It may be a very fine Byronic feeling for a man to experience, that his soul is like a star and dwells apart; but it is not a true and genuine feeling, because it is not social, and recognises not those relationships which actually exist between one star and another; between all the phenomena of space, and all things that are in earth, ocean, air, beloved brotherhood. Nay, to the poet whose words we have just quoted, "bright bird, insect, and gentle beast" were "cherished" as his "kindred." The relations that we have with things beneath us should be as carefully maintained, as those we acknowledge with the things above us; and the wisest of men have seen this most clearly. Thus Goethe calls on us to "reverence even our sins," as the basis of much that is grand both in ourselves, the institutions of society, and the destiny of the world. We should more anxiously cultivate humility than pride.

But this evil of isolation belongs not exclusively to the one transcendent genius, or to the favoured few who have gained the highest eminences of thought or labour. Those who have advanced only a little way beyond their acquaintance in literary, artistic, or scientific attainments, are not a little proud of their acquisitions, and sometimes set up for much greater people than they really are.

They claim privileges to which they have but a very slender title, if any, and become boastful, presumptuous, and overbearing. Alas! in the crudity of their knowledge, they are unaware of the lamentable extent of their ignorance, as also of the fatal boundary which necessarily limits the information of the most learned and the most knowing. They have not been taught with how much truth Socrates made the celebrated affirmation that "All he knew was that he knew nothing."

Man's general capacity for knowledge is, after all, an exceedingly limited power, and as our biographical experience increases, we shall find that the wisest are ever the readiest to acknowledge the inevitable limitation. The true philosopher will always discern in constantly baffled endeavour, sufficient motive for humility and modesty. It is the same with Art. The best artist will always be the most charitable, for he best knows that "art is long and life is short." This conviction of a common defect applying in different stages and degrees to every rate of capacity or accomplishment, should naturally beget a fraternity of feeling, and make even the most ambitious or prosperous still feel himself to be a man with his fellow-men,—and not deport himself as a god who has condescended to walk among men, but who is not of them, —to tread the path they tread, but not to share in their sorrows or short-comings. And be it remembered that even of the godlike the conception just announced has more in it of Heathen prejudice than of Christian sentiment.

To our friend—Amintor—therefore, and those who happen to be in his deplorable case, whatever their degree of talent or success, we would recommend these few remarks, as worthy of their serious consideration. They may, perhaps, not be very profound in themselves or very flattering to the vanity of the parties concerned; nevertheless, they are true, and may be useful. Life is, in fact, a system of relations rather than a positive and independent existence; and he who would be happy himself, and make others happy, must carefully preserve those relations. He cannot stand apart in surly and haughty egotism; let him learn that he is as much dependent on others as others are on him. A law of action and reaction prevails, from which he can be no more exempt than his more modest fellow-men; and, sooner or later, arrogance in whatever sphere of the intellectual or moral development it may obtain, will, nay must, meet its appropriate punishment. The laws of nature, and the demonstrations of mathematics are not more certain than those of our spiritual life, whether manifested in the individual or in society.

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BELGIAN FLOWER-GROWING.

IMPRIMIS. Whatever may have been the respective rank, as gardeners, held by different nations of Europe a hundred years ago, there is no doubt that Great Britain takes precedence of all other competitors, now. On the tripos of horticultural honours, the British are wranglers, the French and Dutch senior optimes, and the Germans junior optimes; while the Italians, and the rest, with a few scattered exceptions, belong to the laggards behind, designated by Cantabs as *οἱ πολλοί*, or "the many." As a consequence, on the Continent generally, the names of Lindley and Hooker, in their line; of Fortune, Lobb, and Douglas in theirs; and of that time-honoured worthy, Philip Miller—who gave us his *Gardener's Dictionary*—and of the Sampsonian London, who was able to grasp and carry whole botanic gardens and arboreturns on his brawny shoulders—are honoured with a respect which approaches the hero-worship paid to Shakspeare, Milton, Molière, and Dante. The list of British nurserymen includes many individuals endowed with learning, energy, talent, and enterprise, in addition to high intrinsic qualities as members of society and heads of families. Not a few British nurserymen have pursued, and still pursue, their interesting but arduous profession more for the love of science and the pleasure of becoming acquainted with the latest botanical discoveries, than for any great emolument derived from it; although, of course, they have a right to live by it, and to receive fair interest for their capital and the risks incurred. Our nurserymen, too, are known and appreciated abroad.

After this just and deserved acknowledgment, I may truthfully assert, that it is with no disposition to undervalue native merit; with no undue fondness for foreign men, things, and ways, that I claim for the Belgian nurserymen a well-merited and world-wide reputation. Not that they are believed to be more skilful than ourselves, or more prompt in the execution of novelties; but the birds of the air seem to twitter all over Europe the fact that, to get good flowers cheap, you must send to Belgium. They do not distinctly utter to what town, and to whom; but an

impression certainly pervades the European mind that FLOWERS FOR THE MILLION stream forth and emigrate from some Belgian source, just as the overflows of the Nile descend from the mountains of the Moon. It has lately been my own good fortune to trace one of these floral inundations to its fountain-head.

There is a curious old city which we call Ghent—which the French and French-speaking Belgians know as Gaud—but which the pure-blooded aborigines, the native Flemings themselves (who ought to know best), proclaim to the world as Stad Gent, or the town Gent, pronouncing the G hard. Ghent alone is estimated to possess more than five-hundred hot-houses and green-houses, which shelter beneath their roofs of glass the major portion of the Flora of the world. Of the city itself, I say nothing to-day, but turn my back on it; issuing by the Rue des Violettes and the Rue de Bruxelles, and leaving the covered riding-school on my left, till I quit the town by the Port de Bruxelles; a drawbridge immediately carries me over the muddy waters of the river Escaut. The city boundary is also the frontier of an adjoining village, Gendbrugge, which abounds in mercantile flower-gardens. The instant you have crossed the Gantois Rubicon, you are stared full in the face by names familiar to the readers of gardening journals (Van Geert, Père, for instance), and by brilliant bouquets of rhododendrons and azaleas not in the least reluctant to show themselves. You peep in at half-open doors, which betray the mysteries behind high brick walls; you perceive blazes of bloom. In something like a shop-window in the last stage of selling off, (but which here is only a token of modest dignity), stand one or two choice specimens of flowering shrubs, which beckon you to inquire within, and, to rummage the treasures of the little grower. Very pretty things, are to be picked up in that way. You pass on, and on the left, a wider field of floriculture extends itself, just visible through the barrière, or gate. Your further curiosity is impeded by verdant hedges, till you reach the residence of the bourgmestre, or mayor of Gendbrugge; himself a prince amongst gardeners. Enter. It is the establishment of Louis Van Houtte—a factory of

flowers on the largest scale—the office wherein is got up the periodical *Flore des Serres*, or *Greenhouse* and *Hothouse Flora*, with its beautiful coloured lithographs, and the seat of the Royal Institute of Horticulture, under the auspices of the Belgian government.

Free trade in plants is the obvious and leading idea communicated by the aspect of the place; practical utility and convenience are evidently the beau-idéal aimed at. And certainly the object has been attained. The garden stands *en rase campagne*, as they say, in the midst of the vast plain which constitutes the Lowlands of Belgium; and not in one of those snug and comfortable nooks which are found along the Devonshire coast, amidst the Highlands of Scotland, or in the valleys of Wales; where the site would be sheltered from cold and boisterous winds. Gentbrugge is subject to awful squalls and frightful hurricanes; there being nothing nearer than the Swedish mountains to break the force of northerly gales, which come sweeping along without having met with the slightest opposition on their arrival at the Belgian coast. Consequently, V. H. (I take the liberty of compressing Monsieur Van Houtte into a couple of initials) has surrounded himself with poplars, willows, elms, and other tall, quick-growing trees, as barricades against the onslaughts of Boreas, and the almost equally mischievous south-west gusts. He is screened from harm by leafy fortifications, to the great disgust of a miller hard by, who has a natural predilection in favour of puffs of wind. Unfortunately, V. H. cannot thus exclude the perfumes emitted by a neighbouring tallow chandler; which, when wafted in the direction of delicate plants, have a tendency to make them feel sick and languid. Besides the grand line of trees along the outer boundary of the nursery (which stands on something like thirty acres), additional shelter is afforded by parallel screens—in fact, by low walls built of living shrubs. In some parts of the garden the screens run from east to west, for the sake of plants that require a little sun, and not too much; other sets of screens run from north to south, allowing their assembled vegetable guests to bask in the broiling noontide sun. V. H. is quite aware that such screens, to be perfect, should be wooden walls composed of boards and planking, rather than lines of growing bushes, whose leaves absorb the elementary particles floating in the atmosphere, to the prejudice of the pot-plants that are standing near them. It is found that a delicate shrub, planted close to a large wood, will not grow so vigorously as it would do if more isolated from hungry neighbours. In England, nursery screens are mostly composed of beech or hornbeam; trees which are tenacious of their leaves all winter long when kept close-clipped. Here, they are made up of miscellaneous shrubs,

apparently the first that came to hand—lilac, laburnum, ribes, *Weigela rosea*, lime, poplar, witch-elm, spirea, hawthorn; anything, in short, and grown as espaliers or fanwise. But the whole continental system of hedge-making differs immensely from the British. In France, favourite hedges are hoed and weeded at foot, three or four times during the year, and are even occasionally manured. An adolescent hedge of *Thuja* here, and another of holly, promise well.

In commencing an establishment for commercial purposes, it is a great point to form a plan capable of extension. Greenhouses in line, like regiments, are more convenient to command, to add to, or to dismiss, than houses either crowded higgledy-piggledy or scattered at random over the area of a garden. The plants, too, are more easily served with their various little comforts and necessities. At V. H.'s, seven houses are heated by one boiler, and are constantly supplied with tepid water for watering by simply pumping the liquid past the hot boiler to a reservoir. A windmill assists the pumping by hand; and a simple application of hydrostatic science cuts off the pressure from a larger tank above, which would otherwise be inconvenient to a smaller tank below. Close at hand a gasometer, filled with home-made gas, furnishes light to the establishment, including the government horticultural school. All the houses are sunk in the ground; you descend to their floor by three or four steps. In this they imitate the habitations of men within the arctic circle and beneath the equator. Snow huts are sunk in, and not built on the snow; the palace at Lucknow contains a suite of cellar apartments for the retreat of royalty in extra sultry weather; and V. H.'s houses stoop to conquer. They obtain, by their depressed level, the advantage of moisture in summer and of warmth in winter. When it is cold at Ghent, it is cold; and when a drying north-east wind blows, it is dry. Against scorching sunshine, there are wooden-louvres, which prevent the chemical and heat-rays, as well as the light-rays, from entering the seminary of delicate young plants, to aid whose progress reduplicated shelter is afforded. Greenhouse within greenhouse, and bellglass under sash-frame, assist the more backward pupils, till their advancement is sufficient to admit of their being sent forth to make their start in public life. Excellent shades are made of wooden splines fixed to cords, something in the way of Venetian blinds. Between each spline a narrow line of sunshine is admitted, which has not time to burn, because the earth's rotation keeps it continually on the move. When no shade is wanted, the blind is rolled up, and secured out of the way with an end of string.

Four distinct propagating houses, kept at the temperature suitable to their purposes

supply the horticultural wants of nations by the multiplication of botanical rarities. The first house—devoted to cuttings alone of tender plants—reveals some curious facts. Certain plants seem to be averse to the painful process of subdivision, becoming pallid after the torture of the knife. *Phylatron Bojerianum*, when made into cuttings, is apt to turn to the hue of a whited sepulchre. The conifers are inclined to be troublesome. *Araucaria* cuttings should be kept awhile before planting, to allow the turpentine to exude. Again, conifer cuttings cannot be taken indiscriminately from any part of the tree to be propagated. Cuttings from the side-shoots of *Thuja Donniana*, for instance, make plants that spread themselves out flat, as if they were crucified. Their shape resembles that of the lower branch of a spruce or silver fir broken off and stuck upright into the ground. An interesting *Araucaria* is *A. Cookii*, so named after Captain Cook. When the great navigator first saw New Caledonia, he observed objects on the coast which might have been the tall chimneys used by an industrial and manufacturing people. They proved to be trees of this *Araucaria*, which runs up straight, thick, and solid, so as to give it the look of a pile of masonry at a distance. Less rare *Araucarias*, as *A. imbricata*, the monkey's puzzle, of which we have remarkable specimens at Dropmore and Kew, are mostly raised from seeds out of imported cones. With numerous other vegetable tit-bits, V. H. is alimanted from England. He fully acknowledges the riches and abilities of our collectors and their employers, and considers himself fortunate in being located so near to Great Britain. Fifty pounds sterling for a camellia from England is a price which bespeaks sincere appreciation. I witnessed the arrival of some well-deported, if not illustrious strangers, who exhibited the straightforward uprightness of Irish yews. *Araucaria Bidwelli*, from England, and its like, are complimented by being called English plants, although, of course, they are natives of the southern hemisphere.

The second propagating house, also heated, is used for grafting and layering. Here you see grafted rhododendrons, in pots plunged to the brim in penitential ashes; layers of variegated-leaved *Hoya carnosa* crawling over the ground (tan and ashes), like broken-backed snakes, and pinned to the earth at every joint of their vertebrae; and tiny cactuses, bristling their tender prickles, like inoffensive new-born hedgehogs, as yet to be handled with impunity. The third plant-fabricator works away at cuttings and grafts of out-door conifers, geraniums, verbenas, and that whole host of bedding things, which are absorbed by European gardens in numbers that baffle all calculation, or even guess. Innumerable cuttings pertly rear their pretty little heads in boxes covered with a pane of

glass, and having the earth they are to strike in covered with light sand. The fourth is a sort of ecalleobion for rousing the dormant vitality of seeds, and for making them open their folded cotyledons, as the wings on which they are to flutter into life. Little broods of seedlings are thus raised in round earthen pans; in the earliest possible stage of their babyhood, they are pricked out into other earthen pans, to be transferred to thumb-pots at the proper age, soon after which shift they are marketable.

In great commercial gardens, like these, a very striking circumstance is the brevity of the stay made by the myriads of plants there. They are here to-day and gone to-morrow. They are hurried into the world, only to be hurried out of the nursery, as fast as possible. They are watched and tended day and night, like infant heirs and princes imperial; they are warmly housed under crystal globes, they are bathed in genial vapour-baths, they are refreshed with draughts of tempered and medicated waters; and then, as soon as they can stand alone, they are sent out to seek their fortune. Their owner hates the very sight of them, if they linger too long within his precincts. From them, as from full-fledged eaglets, parental care is withdrawn the moment they can get on without it. The great nurseries of Europe are as prolific as codfish; their offspring are numbered by tens of millions. In the third or fourth generation their seedlings and cuttings would amount to lines of figures long enough to serve the earth as a belly-band. This countless horticultural fry, once fairly hatched, spreads itself in fish-like shoals over an extent which may partially be comprehended from the fact that Russia, Australia, North America, New Zealand, Ascension Island, and India, are markets and recipients. One afternoon, at V. H.'s, three nice little parcels were sent off at the same time for Worms, Genoa, and Rio Janeiro. In private gardens, people plant a plant as they marry a wife,—to love and to cherish it. There is an understood union between the man and the vegetable for better, for worse, in sickness and in health, so long as they both shall live; unless some intolerable fault or defect leads to a divorce in the shape of a stubbing-up and a contemptuous tossing over the hedge. The nurseryman plants a plant to divide, to subdivide, to propagate, and what we should call to spoil it, in all sorts of ways: to bud, to graft, to layer, to inarch, to take cuttings from the top, and offsets from the root, to pull it to atoms (if the atoms will but live and grow, as sometimes happens); in short, to sell. Consequently, the nurseryman's attachments are fleeting,—almost cynical. He makes acquaintance, rather than forms a friendship, with his subjects. "How do you do?" is followed by "Good-bye!" with the greatest expedition consistent with vegetable physiology. "Come into the house, my little

dear!" and "Get out of the house, you great lazy-bones!" are the short, quick, snappish words of command given, at the briefest intervals, to swarms of seedlings, to crowds of cuttings, to calceolarias comfortably settling themselves in thumb-pots; to tiny bits of heath just beginning to feel themselves at home; to the whole overpowering army of individuals who appear in the annual catalogues. Truly, a nurseryman's establishment is not a palace, but a caravanserai; you call to-morrow to admire what charmed you yesterday, and its place is nowhere to be found.

And yet there exist remarkable exceptions which prove that even nurserymen have human hearts. In many nurseries you will find one or two plants which are not to be parted with for love or money. They are original specimens—show-plants—imported, or raised on the spot,—heir-looms that have displayed their blossoms (or perhaps only promised them) to grandfather, father, son, and grandson. They represent, in sap and stem, instead of in flesh and blood, the old white-haired retainers of an ancient family, or such venerable fourfooted pensioners as the Duke's Waterloo charger, Sir Walter Scott's staghound, or Cowper's last surviving hare. Every labourer employed in a nursery knows and reverences the privileged plant, should there be one. If he does not exactly take off his hat to it, he gazes and keeps at a respectful distance when it bedecks itself in its annual robe of beauty. Aged and ancestral specimens like these look down upon the successive races of ephemeral bedders and window-plants with much the same sort of air as the pyramids of Egypt regard French invaders, Mameluke defenders, or English overland travellers to Bengal. Amongst such time-honoured family-historical plants, may be named the George the Fourth rose at Sawbridgeworth, which Mr. Rivers found more than thirty years ago, one morning in June, when looking over the first bed of roses he ever raised from seed, on which plant he set his mark, and found afterwards that it completely eclipsed all the dark roses known. Of such, in still a higher degree—although not apparently a very remarkable specimen—is a Chinese tree-pæony which grows at the end of one of the houses in Kew Gardens. It is the original plant of the showy and delicate Moutan, introduced by Sir Joseph Banks, and the grandmother, or great-great-grandmother, of most of the Moutans that have fixed their quarters in European gardens. It merits a pilgrimage from the nurserymen themselves, having been the means of putting something like a hundred thousand pounds into their united pockets. At V. H.'s I inquired after the plants that had retired with a pension out of his civil list, and found NONE actually recognised as permanent residents; though I hope, and believe, that a few, at least, will contrive to

insert their roots so deep as to be past the possibility of extraction.

"Where's your *Victoria-regia*?" I asked.

"Oh, everything in this world wears up. It began to get a little stale, so we turned its tank into an orchid-and-palm-house."

"You will surely keep that handsome pair of American aloes?" I could not help observing.

"Yes," answered V. H., hesitatingly, "perhaps. Yes, I shall keep them. But one day, some magnificent Boyard will come with an amiable countenance, begging me to let him have them; and then they will go."

"And the two young *Wellingtonias* that are so nicely established, and which will be such gigantic fellows one of these days,—overtopping St. Bavon's steeple possibly: you won't part with them?"

"I don't know—no—perhaps."

"But do you retain for yourself absolutely none of all the beautiful things that pass through your hands?"

"My dear sir, when I lived at Rio Janeiro, I occasionally saw sales of slaves. Sisters were sometimes sold to separate masters: one went north, the other went south. Then they said to each other, 'Adieu, Katerina! Adieu, Maria! The time is come: we must part. Adieu!' Exactly so, my plants are my slaves. I am obliged to be hard-hearted. When their time is come, I must pitilessly say 'Adieu!' to them, as they must to me, and to each other."

Notwithstanding which profession of callousness, it is possible that a long respite may yet be accorded to a *Thuja aurea*, to a Moutan pæony on the lawn, and to one or two choice conifers besides. I shall feel personal regret if any covetous evil eye causes the displacement of a double, or rather a hose-in-hose lilac, at the entrance; and it will be impossible to disturb a *Pinus Pinsapo*, from the *Tierra Nievada*, in Spain, planted the day when V. H.'s boy learned his first lessons, to test by its thriftiness how he got on. I am happy to report that both the youngster and the pine-tree give their friends every reason to be satisfied with their progress.

Many are the curiosities and beauties, old and new, contained in the various hot and greenhouses, as well as between the verdant screens. A blue *hydrangia* has small, delicate fertile flowers hidden beneath the broad, flat, sterile ones, as sultanas of the seraglio are carefully concealed by their fat and beardless overseers. What a beautifully straight and polished shaft is that shot up by the *Lilium giganteum*, to display a bunch of amaryllis-like blossoms at the altitude of twelve or fifteen feet! It is a vegetable sky-rocket solidified and rooted to the ground. I know of no flower, not even the tuberose or the pyramidal campanula, so well adapted for combination with architectural forms as this. Fancy an entrance hall, or a colonnaded passage, with marble pillars; and in front of

each column, or between them when not stopping the way, imagine a gigantic taper lily, grown singly in a sculptured vase, shooting upwards as if endeavouring to help to prop the architrave! Ladies in deep mourning might wear a bouquet of *Gommersonia ferruginea*, a sad-looking plant with dull black-and-white flowers. The Patagonian beech, a natural dwarf, and one of the most southern trees in the world, makes a pretty pot-plant, with its small, shining, box-like leaves. Who would look out for an ever-green cherry-tree? And yet there is a holly-leaved cherry, *Cerasus ilicifolia*, an English plant, from California. A consignment of plants of the Winter's bark, a valuable febrifuge, from the north of Chili, with its handsome laurel-like leaves, purple where they are not green, would be an acceptable present to our mild-climated colonies. From New Caledonia V. H. has introduced the *Clianthus magnificus*, still more brilliant in flower, and less straggling in growth than the puniceus, or glory pen. There is a house full of pitcher-plants, of all sizes and shapes. Perhaps the drollest species of this eccentric family is a tiny one, *Cephalotus follicularis* from New Holland, which has little mugs, about the size of an infant's thimble, whose aperture is surrounded with minute hooks curved inside, rendering egress impossible to any fly that has crept within. The young leaves of *Rhododendron Edgeworthii* are covered with a comfortable great-coat of wool; the flowers are four inches in diameter, scented with heliotrope and vanilla combined. There is a perverse-minded fern, which insists upon growing, like a green bracket, against a perpendicular surface, well worth the attention of decorative artists. English modellers may see it at Kew, at Veitch's, and elsewhere. In the mountains of Brazil there grows a set of very beautiful plants called *Rhopalas*; they are covered with velvet, especially on the young leaves, which are brown. We have four or five species here. There is a hothouse plant, *Pilea callitrichoides*, of tender, brittle, and juicy aspect, which looks as if it would be good to eat in a cooling salad, but which is really of so explosive a temperament that it might fairly be called the pistol-plant. When near flowering, and with its tiny buds ready to open, if the plant is either dipped in water or abundantly watered, each bud will explode successively, keeping up a mimic Sebastopolitan bombardment, sending forth a puff of gunpowder smoke,—or a little cloud of dusty pollen,—as its stamens suddenly start forth to take their place and form a cross. It is no novelty; but is still an amusing toy, which produces a plentiful crop of pop-guns. An ugly flower,—and not many such exist,—serves as a foil to acknowledged beauties. It must be the only motive for cultivating the *Brexia Madagascariensis*, an unpleasant plant from an unpleasant place, with

dirty greenish-yellow blossoms, with no scent, with no anything. I should look a long time at a couple of francs before I paid them for such a fright of a thing as that. *Plectranthus laciniatus*, var. *Blume*, looks as if every one of its leaves had been bitten and torn by a savage dog.

Some of the shelves on which the plants are ranged are fringed with the bright-green worsted-work of *Lycopodium denticulatum*. An upright edge of sheet-lead retains sufficient earth for the moss to grow in. Another pretty greenhouse edging is furnished by the twin lilac flowers of *Streptocarpus biflorus*, similarly planted, on a level with the eye. A style of vegetation which pleases on close inspection is seen in the specimens of speckled, striped, and coloured-clouded foliage. In masses in the open air they do not tell—their effect is lost; but, immediately beneath the eye of the observer, they reveal a curious and beautiful organisation. The *Sonerila margaritacea* has dark-green heart-shaped leaves, sprinkled with pearls, and bears a profusion of crimson flowers with yellow stamens. The *Maranta regalis* (flower unknown) has stripes of red, as if its leaves had been slashed with a bloody knife. The *Aphelandra Leopoldi*, bold and vigorous, has a milky streak along each principal vein. *Bilbergia Carolina* grows like a pineapple, but the central leaves are bright crimson. *Echytis nutans* has an oval red-veined leaf; *Cissus marmorea*, green velvet leaves shaded with white and purple. There is another very pretty genus, grown under bell-glasses, whose leaves are mostly void of every shade of green, but are tinged with yellow, brown, black, and bronze, as if they had been electro-plated and covered with a thin metallic coat having a dull and non-reflective surface. Let me add to this list of singularities, *Dracæna terminalis* and *Bartolonia marmorea*. In sooth, nurserymen had need be born with an Adamite propensity for giving and remembering names. Only peruse, and study too, as it well deserves, V. H.'s *Prix Courant*, or catalogues.

All these collected treasures require the utmost care to keep them thriving. It is hard that, whatever pains are taken to secure valuable exotics from injury—and some ivy-like climbers are indulged with a piece of cork-bark, instead of a cold wall, to mount—unexpected accidents will happen, and interfere with the trader's profits. Most people would say that, to fatten snails on orchids, is what they would no more think about doing, than to pamper donkeys on pine-apples. And yet an epicurean slug will destroy the buds of a lovely *Phalænopsis aimabilis* worth five guineas; and then, after the mischief is done, the horticulturist, to save other victims, must paint his woodwork with saltpetre and water, and must place his plants on shelves covered with rough coal-cinders saturated with moisture, to prevent injury to the plants from other causes. For slugs entertain a serious

objection to the severe currycombing which the points of the scorise inflict on their mucous hides.

Strong in bulbs is our friend V. H. There are open-ground compartments filled with modest dog's-tooth violets, with delicate *ixias*, and with brightly-blazing incendiary tulips, looking ready to set the place on fire, if they were only put in contact with combustible matter. A still better test of the practical ability of the master-mind is the bulb-house—a large, light, airy room—where the roots repose during their annual holidays, on open shelves and well-ventilated stages, with a warm-water pipe running round the apartment, to drive away all mischievous damp. Muggy moisture stagnant in the air is worse than the plague for torpid roots. Perhaps, one of the strongest bodies of troops is the regiment of picked *calceolarias*. The Bon Jardinier justly declares that it would be quite impossible for any good gardener not to make mention of the success, in the raising from seed, and the culture of herbaceous *calceolarias*, which has been attained by M. Van Houtte. These virgin's sabots, or slipper-worts, have been diversified, by art combined with sportive nature, into an infinite complexity of patterns and tints. Look over a good collection of several hundreds, and you cannot find two varieties alike. At the proper time (the close of May), and in the proper place (a cool and airy greenhouse), the hybridiser plies his magic work, seated on a wizard throne, which, more likely than not, consists of an empty packing-case set on end. He has before him, on a bench, a range of the most beautiful, the most delicate, and the choicest *calceolarias*. His only apparatus is a pair of pointed tweezers that close with a spring. With these pincers he simply takes out the anthers of the full-blown flower of one plant, and applies them to the top of the pistil of the open flower of another plant, and the thing is done—the charm works. The seed produced will be the sure parent of variegated flowers. It is not necessary to extract previously the stamens from the plant to be hybridised. To the pistils of the second plant are again applied the anthers from a third, and so on, till the whole select assembly are thus made to interchange and communicate their respective merits, to enhance the perfection of the next generation. The result, the following spring, is an assortment of fairy purses that might have been cut out of ethereal tissues—webs of yellow, bronze, cream-colour, pink, brown, crimson, and white—speckled like toads' backs; printed with notes, like music-paper; dusted with gold; blotched with treacle; marbled with rich plumpudding veins; daubed with lemon-cream; peppered with spots stolen from butterflies' wings; curdled into clots of purple custard; covered with a network of spider-web lace; stained with tears from eyes that weep blood; stamped with coloured inks

from nature's secretaire; sealed with Flora's private signet-ring; dipped, soaked, and sodden in deep rich washes; splashed, as if two or three rival painters had tried which should lay on paint the thickest; embroidered in patterns of most irregular regularity; zigzagged with flashes of mimic lightning; striped, like zebras; blotted and pot-hooked like a schoolboy's copy-book; dragged through the mud of a scene-painter's workshop; dusted, blurred, everything, in short, in the way of colouring—except a dash of blue—which you can fancy happening to a flower that patches itself like a harlequin, and changes hue like a camelion.

Haste we past our out-door favourites, that pleasant columbine, *Aquilegia juncunda*—decidedly the flower of the family—and the deliciously-scented hybrid single *pæony*, P. Smotti; past the beds of seedling *rhododendrons*, the harmonious union of *azaleas*, with pink, cream-coloured, and yellow blossoms; past Siebold's hardy *polygonum*, which displays its bright red flowers in the sandiest soils. Glance, then, at the useful carpenter's shops. Peep into the seed warehouse, lighted with gas, for storing flower, kitchen-garden, and agricultural grains, which are deposited along the walls, on shelves partitioned into innumerable pigeon-holes, and where a sort of long-drawn linen-horse, sprawls across the centre of the room, shaped like the letter A and hung with paper and canvas seed-bags. Scramble next through the frame-ground, full of sprouting balsams, China-asters, stocks, and French marigolds. Close by, are seed-sowing rooms; and around are congregated a set of fruit-trees, the subjects of operation on stated days, when three or four hundred people come from diverse and distant localities, to witness public lessons in pruning, the Belgian government supplying tickets at half-price along all their own (the government's) railways.

We have reached the packing and receiving-house, a cheerful apartment consisting of a long parallelogram with windows all round, heated and lighted by gas at night, and surmounted by a capital light attic, or grenier. It is a pleasure to receive a basket of plants from V. H.'s, if only for the interest of unpacking it. For short distances, the travellers are placed in flat round baskets, and covered with a tent of bast-mat supported by sticks; but when the journey is likely to last more than four and twenty hours, they are secured in wooden packing-cases. And, besides, every precious flower-bud, as in the case of *camellias*, is enveloped in paper; every straggling sprig is tied to the central stem, which is held up by a guardian stake covered with either paper or cotton wadding, to prevent chafing and bruises from the motion of their vehicle. Sometimes a paper hood is made to shelter each individual plant. But of wadding—some gardeners say that it is good, and others

that it is bad; the same of paper. Weak plants, or such as require a humid atmosphere, are sent away covered with bell-glasses held down tight by a sort of improvised network. The pots are then set close together on an elastic cushion of moss at the bottom of the basket, plenty of the same being thrust between them, to avoid any jarring and quarrelling along the road. The despatch of parcels of plants may vary a little with the season; but, on the whole, it continues steadily all the year round. Summer is the time when things are sent to northern countries, for the reason that it is the only possible time. The North Pole is not a kindly neighbour to, nor a hospitable receiver of, hothouse plants during the winter months.

The amount of material thus annually consumed in the mere act of consignment, is considerable. Thus; some three hundred pounds of string take their departure; labels *ad infinitum*; sticks, in bundles, which could they hold together, would be stronger than the most *Æsopian* father could desire. Formerly, an immense number of newspapers were used as packing-paper. It will not do to apply them to the purpose now; because the custom-house officials of certain governments would tear up suspected journals, leaving the poor plants all cold and naked, for fear their wrappers should smuggle in any treasonable matter offensive to the state. Some five thousand bundles of moss are yearly consumed, each weighing about twenty pounds. This moss is beaten with sticks, like the wool for mattresses, to make it soft and to get rid of impurities. The operation is rather offensive, down-stairs; so V. H. intends kicking up a dust in the attic, whence the prepared article can be shot down through a square wooden tube, to the feet of the nurses who are putting pot-plants to bed.

Of the government horticultural school, the museum, the library, and the printing-office of coloured lithography, there is no time, now, to say a word. Without them, it will be believed, the head of the house has quite enough to manage. Four thousand three hundred and fifty-nine business letters were received in the course of the year 'fifty-five: every letter is registered. All letters sent out are first copied by a press. One hundred men and boys are employed on the *Flore des Serres*, and fifty persons in the horticultural department. If we did not know what an amount of work some people can and will get through with, we might say that such an intricate concern was enough to worry a man to death. One mode of facilitating business is a code of coloured signals, to be hung up on pins at the window of the office, past which runs the principal thoroughfare of the garden. One signal announces that the chief is visible, and may be spoken with by whoever wants; another, that the head of the hothouses is required; another,

that the foreman of the propagators has a communication awaiting his attendance; another, that something is not quite right, and that the gendarmes must be summoned with all expedition. With all these details to regulate, arrangements are still made for the polite reception of visitors. At the front gate is affixed a board, on which is legibly inscribed, "Price of entrance, a franc each person. The entire amount of the price of entrance will be deducted from any purchases which the visitors may make." That is, a party of six ladies and gentlemen—for I will suppose that nursemaids and riotous children with hoops and balls will be sent to take their walks elsewhere—may enjoy a delightful and instructive visit for the reasonable charge of six francs; and, at the end of it, they may carry home with them half-a-dozen pretty plants, or more, for nothing. Who can complain of such a tax as this, imposed entirely to effect the exclusion of troublesome and objectless idlers? English nurserymen are only too well acquainted with the genus, which seems to have been created by Providence for the final cause of exercising their patience.

At the gate, I will bid good bye to V. H. for the present, impressed with the idea that I have taken leave of a man of ability, of clear and sound judgment, and with his heart, as we say, in the right place.

MARRIAGE GAOLERS.

GAOLERS are of various kinds. There are gaolers of criminal prisons—men of square heads and powerful shoulders, who carry colossal keys in their mighty hands, and look as if they lived over a gunpowder train with the match burning, and they knew it: gaolers of financial prisons, jovial and lynx-eyed, who pry sharply into feminine pockets and baskets, and direct trembling women to the six-in-ten and eight-in-four they came to see: gaolers of political prisons—of an apocryphal order these in England—whose romantic daughters file off chains at dead of night, drug guards with brandy and laudanum—a fine thing in cholera times—and, with a tear and a blessing, and lots of money stolen from the till, set the captive hero free to the infinite disgrace of their gaoler relative: and there are gaolers parochial and gaolers lunatic—nautical gaolers and scholastic gaolers; but the worst gaoler of all is the marital gaoler, as constituted by the laws of our illogical merrie old England.

An absolute lord is this marital gaoler. He holds the person, property, and reputation of his conjugal prisoner in as fast a gaol as ever was built of granite and iron. Society and law are the materials, unsubstantial enough, out of which he has built his house of duress; but in those airy cells lie more broken hearts than ever the sternest

dungeon held. More injustice is committed there than in the vilest Austrian prison known. If the gaoler-marital be a decent fellow, and in love with his prisoner, things may go on smoothly enough. But if he be a man of coarse or fickle passions—if he be a man without conscientiousness or honour—if he be a man of violent temper, of depraved habits, of reckless life, he may ill-treat, ruin, and destroy his prisoner at his pleasure—all in the name of the law, and by virtue of his conjugal rights. The prisoner-wife is not recognised by the law; she is her gaoler's property, the same as his dog or his horse; with this difference, that he cannot openly sell her; and if he maim or murder her he is liable to punishment, as he would be to prosecution by the Cruelty to Animals' Society, if he maimed or ill-treated his dog or his horse. As "the very legal being of the wife is suspended during the marriage, or at least incorporated and consolidated with that of the husband" (vide Blackstone), it is therefore simply as a sentient animal, not as a wife, nor as a citizeness, that she can claim the protection of the laws; and then only in cases of personal and distinct brutality which threatens her life. The same protection, and only the same, as is granted to slaves in the United States—as is granted to all sentient and domesticated animals in most civilised communities. The prisoner-wife has no property. All that she possessed before her marriage, and all that she may earn, save, or inherit after her marriage, belongs to her husband. He may squander her fortune at the gaming-table, or among his mistresses; he may bequeath it to his illegitimate children, leaving his wife and her children to beggary; he may do with it as he will; the law makes him lord and gaoler, and places the poor trembling victim unreservedly in his hands. The like may he do with the earnings, the savings of his wife, during his incarceration, if he have committed a crime; during his desertion, if he have taken a fancy to desert her for some one else; during a separation, forced on him by her friends, to protect her from his brutality. Whatever be the cause which has thrown the wife on her own resources, and made her work and gain, he may swoop down like a bird of prey on the earnings gained by her own work while she was alone; he may seize them and carry them off unhindered, leaving her to the same terrible round of toil and spoliation, until one or the other may die. That this is not mere declamation, three authentic instances of the exercise of such marital rights are given in a certain admirable, wise, and witty pamphlet* recently published: of which we will say no more in the way of criticism than that it is worthy of SYDNEY SMITH.

"A widow, with a small personal property

and three young children, was induced, by a scoundrel lurking under the garb of a preacher, to marry him without a settlement. He then threw off the mask, treated her and her children most scandalously, and indulged in the most disgraceful drunkenness and debauchery. Still, his career was so short, that when he sunk under his excesses, the little property was not seriously impaired, and the poor woman though again in a state of pregnancy, was not in actual despair. In a few days she was driven to madness when she discovered that this man, shortly after the marriage, had made a will, by which he had bequeathed her little all to an illegitimate child of his own."

A second case given, is that of a young girl who married, somewhat against her father's consent, a young man of indifferent character. "Her father died suddenly without having made a will or settlement of any kind: and very shortly after, the husband in a moment of drunken fury, committed a felonious assault on his unhappy wife. He was tried and convicted of the felony, and the property of the wretched wife, which, upon its descending to her, was instantly transferred by the law to him, became forfeited to the crown by reason of a felony of which she was not the perpetrator, but the victim."

In the third case, the husband of a very decent woman was convicted of a crime in his own family too horrible to particularise. He was sent to prison for three years. The wife removed to a distant part of the country, where, under an assumed name, she supported herself and her children in comfort, and was even enabled to save out of her earnings. One evening her husband came suddenly to the house, inflamed with drink, and burning with evil passions. He came in the name of the English law to claim his marital rights over her person and her earnings, to take his place in the family whose virtue he had outraged, and whose safety he had endangered. Convicted of such a horrible crime as he had been, he was none the less lord and master; the wife could none the more obtain a release from him and his vice. He was gaoler by right of English law; and she was his prisoner by the fiat of English bigotry.

But there is a difference in properties, the personal and the real: the first belongs to the husband, the second to the heir.

If a wife die without children, her houses and lands pass to her next male heir; but if she have a child, and that child be heard to cry but once, and both mother and babe then instantly expire, they belong to her husband for life, under the not very intelligible title of Tenant by the Courtesy of England Consummate. Should the babe live, the gaoler-marital is only Tenant by the Courtesy of England Inchoate, and has to give up possession on the boy's twenty-first birthday. The sheep, oxen, Sèvres china, kid gloves,

* Remarks upon the Law of Marriage and Divorce, suggested by the Hon. Mrs. Norton's Letters to the Queen. Ridgeway, Piccadilly.

satin shoes, lace collars, gold bracelets, brooches, chains, hair-pins, furniture, and pet dogs, constituting, among a thousand like articles, what is called personalty, belong unreservedly to the husband; who can pawn, sell, or give them away, the instant the clergyman has pronounced the marriage blessing. Now what do you say to these as prerequisites of the gaoler marital?

Turning now from property to divorce—what do we find? A gaoler marital may entertain as many ladies light-of-love as he pleases. He may support them out of his wife's property, he may even endow them with that property after his death, and leave his lawful lady and her children to want and misery,—and the wife has no remedy. The relief of divorce was not instituted for her. Many have tried the question, and almost all have been thrown. In an infinite number of years, and out of millions of victims groaning for deliverance, only four have obtained divorce. Cruelty, infidelity, vice, crime, desertion, nothing that would seem to be a natural and common-sense breaking of the nuptial bond is allowed to stand as a legal severance, for her benefit. The wife must bear her chains to the grave, though they eat into her very soul; she must submit to every species of wrong and tyranny—the law has no shield for her! But when a gaoler wishes to get rid of a prisoner, it is quite another thing! It is in reality but an affair of money. If he can afford the various legal processes demanded by our wise laws, he can be free to-morrow,—be his wife the most virtuous lady in the land. If he chooses he can collude with some villain, whom he accuses of being his wife's lover. The man does not defend the action, and judgment is allowed to go by default. The villain is assessed in damages which he may pay with one hand and receive with the other. We say that, all this may happen if a gaoler will; the law does not provide against such a possibility. The accused wife is not told of the time or manner of the trial. She is not supposed to appear as a witness, nor to defend herself by counsel. The action is not brought against her, but against the lover, for damage alleged to be done to the gaoler's property; the wife's existence, as wife or woman is ignored; she is only judged and assessed by her monetary value. This is the English law of divorce, and English gentlemen's feelings on conjugal infidelity. And then we ridicule the foreigner's belief that we sell our wives, because we do not take them to market with a halter round their necks,—at least, not when we are in good society,—and because we only receive money as a manly manner of compensation, when they have given their souls and love to another. The difference may be great in form; certainly the one mode is simpler than the other; but surely the spirit is identically the same!

This, then, is marriage: on the one side a gaoler, on the other a prisoner for life, a legal nonentity, classed with infants and idiots; or, if there should ever come liberty, coming only through that poor prisoner's hopeless ruin;—ruin she is powerless to avert, be she the most innocent of God's creatures. Neither property nor legal recognition, neither liberty nor protection has she, nothing but a man's fickle fancy, and a man's frail mercy between her and misery, between her and destruction. This is marriage as by the law of England. Let those who doubt it, and those who do not doubt it, consult the vigorous and manly writer, with a head as sound as his heart, whose pamphlet has supplied these notable illustrations.

SCOTCH COAST FOLK.

THE Bridge of Don has, for many centuries, been a bridge of renown, under the name of the Brig o' Balgounie. Indeed, ever since the quaking, shivering, cracking, shifting, rising, sinking, and revolutionary planet Earth, which we inhabit—delusively believing the plaything of fire and flood is something staid, solid, and conservative—split the rocks of Balgounie into a chasm of frowning granite, the locality has not been one to be forgotten by man or beast, however slightly tintured with geological curiosity. When the split was made by an earthquake, the waters of the hills and the waves of the sea filled it up with diluvial soil, or with sand and pebbles. Ever since, the river called the Don has flowed through it to the sea. Probably, the records of a grand catastrophe of nature, inscribed upon the spot, were the first sources of the traditions which filled this dark abyss with supernatural creatures,—with Neptunic and Vulcanic impersonations, kelpies and brownies. No doubt the wild chasm seemed something quite formidable when it cut off communication between the scanty families who inhabited the district of Buchan and the few hundreds of persons who formed the germs of the populations of Old and New Aberdeen.

After the Scotch had secured their independence, by the final expulsion of the English from Scotland, they naturally turned their attention to the improvement of the communications of their country; and bridge-building must have seemed the most glorious art of the epoch. The Brig o' Balgounie would of good right attract universal fame. The bridge was built towards the end of the reign of Robert the Bruce, upon the estate of Balgounie, and was probably as great a marvel of the art of the engineer, in the fourteenth, as the tubular bridge is in the nineteenth century. The River Don, in approaching the sea, flows slowly and darkly through a chasm in the granite rocks, which is fully half-a-mile long. Being black and deep, one corner of it is called

The Black Neuk. At the turning out of the black nook, the rocks of the chasm approach; and just where the river comes in sight of the sea, the engineer has thrown, from rock to rock across the sullen flood, a bridge of a single, lofty, narrow, Gothic arch. The name of Bishop Cheyne is connected with its erection; but, whatever may have been the utility of the bridge, and however great may have been the admiration of it as a work of art, the population of the neighbourhood must have been terribly oppressed by the clergy. When the Reformation came, they destroyed the magnificent cathedral of the parish, Old Machar. And even in the nineteenth century, the reply to any one who said to the Don fishers or peasantry, "Why, the bishops, at any rate, gave you a wonderful bridge," was, "Aye, but they oppressed us well to pay for it." Contemporary with Bishop Cheyne, with Bruce, and Wallace, there lived in Scotland a Thomas the Rhymer, who never bled for his country, who built no useful bridges in it, who did nothing for it that I wot of but rhyme, but who has left behind him a name rivalling the fame of the heroes. When the bridge was the admiration of everybody, and when old people, whose minds brooded over traditions of earthquakes would be saying, "Where there has been one crack there may be another," Thomas recorded in rhyme the popular prophecy; and the people exalted to the supernatural rank the man who expressed their own wise guesses in ever-memorable words. Thomas said, in words of old Scotch, which I translate, for the benefit of my countrymen, "Strong is your wall, Bridge of Balgounie! But, with a wife's only grandson and a mare's only foal, down you shall fall"—

Wight is y'er wa'
 Brig o' Balgounie!
 But wi' a wife's ae oie
 An' a mare's ae foie,
 Doon ye sall fa'.

Persons who remember the earthquake of eighteen hundred and sixteen will not wonder that grey-headed people should have doubted the stability of the bridge. Why, I remember rushing in my night-clothes into the middle of the street in the early morning, and encountering a crowd of neighbours who had thought of nothing but escaping from their shaking houses! Nobody who remembers it can ever afterwards have a particle of belief in the solidity of anything. Their wonder is, not that granite splits, and houses fall, but that anything remains upright. At Inverness, a column of granite, erected as a monument, was twisted by this shock. The Rhymer, I insist upon it, recorded the popular inference from the geological traditions of the district in his time. As for the supernatural forms of tradition, they are the shapes in which mankind treasure up their records of natural wonders.

The rhyming prophecy was not merely dressed up in harmonious Scotch, there is wisdom and wit in it. In all the population, there was no one more likely to be reminded of the prophecy than the only grandson of a grandmother. There was wisdom and kindness in the prophecy; for the bridge was dangerous, and the roads and river in the vicinity were full of perils. The rhyme was a needful warning to caution. The parapets were low, the arch high and narrow, and it was fearful to look over and down into the dark depths. Not unfrequently did it happen that the horses of reckless riders took fright, and leaped over the parapet into the gulf beneath. I have seen many a prudent horseman dismount, and lead his horse along the bridge. Two roads met at the northern side of the bridge, the western one descending steeply by a route which overhangs The Black Neuk. When in the months of January and February the road was suddenly blocked up by snow, belated equestrians, over full of confidence and whiskey, sometimes mistook the turning, and, approaching too near the precipice, slid down into The Black Neuk. Thus geological tradition, shrewd wit, and warning wisdom, may all be found in the prophecy of Thomas the Rhymer.

A poet and several painters have echoed and repeated, in the nineteenth century, the wizard renown of the Brig o' Balgounie. Byron includes it in his brief list of Scottish recollections, in Don Juan.

But I am half a Scot by birth, and bred
 A whole one, and my heart flies to my head,
 As "auld lang syne" brings Scotland, one and all,
 Scotch plaids, Scotch snoods, the blue hills, and clear streams,

The Dee, the Don, Balgounie's Brig's black wall,
 All my boy-feelings, all my gentler dreams
 Of what I then dreamt, clothed in their own pall,
 Like Banquo's offspring!—floating past me seems
 My childhood in this childishness of mine:
 I care not—'tis a glimpse of "auld lang syne."

In a note, he says—"The brig of Don, near the auld town of Aberdeen, with its one arch and its black, deep salmon stream below, is in my memory as yesterday. I still remember, though perhaps I may misquote, the awful proverb which made me pause to cross it, and yet lean over it with a childish delight, being an only son, at least by the mother's side. The saying, as recollected by me, was this; but I have never heard or seen it since I was nine years of age:—

Brig of Balgounie, black's your wa,
 Wi' a wife's ae son, and a mear's ae foal,
 Down ye shall fa'!

The proverb, as given by Lord Byron, has passed into all the Scottish guide-books. No doubt it is, as he gives it, very nearly what he was told. A roguish variation of it has been made to him, to adapt it to his own case, and apply it to his superstitious fears, a variation perfectly in the spirit of the original. But the distich he gives is not rhyme; and

when I read it to old natives of the village at the Bridge of Don, none of them would receive it as the original. I have given the verses as preserved by tradition in my native parish.

M. Gudin, a distinguished French painter, exhibited a picture of the Brig o' Balgounie, in the Paris Palace of the Fine Arts, in eighteen hundred and fifty-five. He tried by the effects of colour to produce the supernatural and superstitious features of the scene without having had enough of geological insight to feel that the wildness and grandeur of the spot came from a terrestrial convulsion. He has not "dipped his pencil in the gloom of earthquakes." The grey bridge, the brown rocks, the black river, the fir and beech-trees, and the furze-bushes in the faces of the cliffs, with a tinge of lightning in the varied sky, form undoubtedly a picturesque assemblage of colours, and an extraordinary picture. But the painter has missed the grandeur which dates from the earthquake which rent the rocks, the truth of terror which thrilled the boy-poet, and consequently his canvas is not one on which the spectator can gaze until he feels the fears of superstition curdling his veins.

The Don is distinguished as a salmon stream. The earthquake made the fortune of the river. Deep and dark with rocky ledges full of sediment, the chasm is just such an aqueous, shady bower as the salmon love. It is about a mile from the sea. Just as there are families of hereditary salmon in the Don, there are families of hereditary fishers upon its banks to catch them. Surely it is a curious destiny which thus establishes relations between generations of men and generations of salmon. The salmon-fishers of the Don are probably of Norwegian, as the haddock-fishers of the Dee seem to be of Dutch origin.

Large salmon are still called "lax" in Scotland as in Norway. The Norwegians appear to have been the great salmon-fishers of the west and north of Europe. The salmon anglers of our day—a dandy race as different as possible from salmon-fishers—find in Norway gigantic thirty or forty pounders, of whose capture they boast in print, as if as large or larger had not been found in the Scottish rivers. When Mr. Hill of Edinburgh calotyped the fisher folk of the Frith of Forth he produced pictures which reminded connoisseurs of the paintings of Ostade or Teniers. When a Swedish war-ship was anchored in the Bay of Cromarty, the Swedish sailors, it was observed differed in nothing except language from the natives of Cromarty. The probabilities are indeed, that the folks of the eastern and northern coasts of Scotland are just Dutch and Scandinavian colonies.

The salmon, which was unknown to Aristotle, and only heard of by Pliny, as it is not a Mediterranean fish, is closely connected with the destinies of the Northern races. It formed an important item of their food.

Salmon fishing is an admirable application of science to utility. The man who first combined a knowledge of the salmon with the contrivances of the fisher has been forgotten by the world he benefited. He was, perhaps, as well worthy of remembrance, however, as if he had won battles or spun rhymes. He sat upon the banks of his northern river, while the water-insects played above the stream, and his kettle and his stomach were empty. The salmon leapt to catch the flies—here one and there another—as the evening shadows darkened upon the stream. I hear him ask himself: "How am I to put one of these splendid fish into my empty kettle? The girl who plighted with me the troth of Odin looks sunk-eyed while she suckles my boy. I promised to nourish them when beside the pillar, and I cannot do it unless I can wile the salmon into the kettle." He did it. Is there not a vast amount of observation and ingenuity combined in the practice of spearing salmon by torchlight? Was it not an application to the tenants of the water of the warfare of the sea-kings? Was not the first idea of a hook with a dragon-fly upon it a thought of genius? What honours could have been deemed too great for the man who first combined a boat, a net and a "keener?" What observer among naturalists of renown has merited as well of the northern races, as the man who first recorded the periodical migrations of the salmon and their annual return to their native rivers?

There is a confirmation of the Scandinavian origin of the salmon-fishers in this mode of fishing which is the same in Scotland as in Norway. During the season when the salmon enter the rivers "keeners," kenners, or knowers, are placed upon sheltered seats high up on the southern bank of the Don, between the sea and the chasm. The boats with the nets are stationed on the river, and the boatmen watch the slightest movements of the hands of the keener, and oar their boats and spread out their nets as his signs direct them. The affair is a contest between human and animal sagacity. The salmon know that if they can only pass along the shallow part of the stream into the deep fresh-water they are safe. During the night or on cloudy days they steal along one or two at a time, fearful lest the slightest gleam of sunshine or the movements of their fins should reveal their whereabouts. When salmon are passing up the river there is a ripple upon the surface which only the eyes of a keener can see. This clearness of eyesight is a gift, a natural advantage improved by study and experience. The ripple is unlike every other which appears upon the surface of the river. It shows there is a displacement going on beneath, in the globules of the water. It is a sign of a struggle between the ascending fish and the descending current. In Norway and in Scotland the nets were formerly floated with small barrels, but they are now

floated by means of corks. The high seat of the keener is sometimes a wooden erection overlooking the river or the lake, and he can himself occasionally, by pulling a cord, adjust the net to capture the salmon.

The Scandinavians who first taught the chase of the salmon could never have been excited to it by the stuff sold at half-a-crown a pound in large towns. Londoners and Parisians delusively fancy they know the taste of salmon. Bah! they might as well pretend to know the taste of milk or water! The Scandinavians had tasted salmon. They knew what it was to feel a creamy slice dissolving in the mouth. No wonder they devoted their minds to the capture of such food. Indeed, bears, seals, otters and Scandinavians who catch and eat fresh salmon show they know what is what. As for the people in the Gallic and Britannic centres of civilisation who buy dissections of the genus *Salmo* at half-a-crown a pound, I can only hope the principle of the aquariums or fish tanks may speedily be applied in their service. I make a present of the idea to any man who has at hand a sufficiency of capital, science, and patience.

Men, bears, otters, and seals, display their various endowments in the different methods they employ to catch salmon. The otters watch in holes in the banks of the river for an unwary prey. The bears make holes in the Polar ice by jumping upon it until it breaks, and then they watch like keeners until the salmon approach the holes in search of oxygenised water, which they may breathe as a breath of fresh air. When the salmon approach, the bears spring upon them and catch them.

During the salmon-fishing season at Kamtschatka the salmon arrive in such numbers in the creeks and rivers, that the bears catch them without difficulty. The inhabitants say, a bear can catch twenty or thirty salmon in a night. The bears are such epicures that they only eat the heads and backs, except when hunger makes them less dainty. What the bears would think of the salmon of London and Paris this deponent will not say, until he hears the opinion of a bear in the witness-box. Seals hunt the salmon in the sea and chase them up the rivers. The Scottish Scandinavians, whatever their own faults may be in reference to the salmon, love them jealously and resent fiercely the attacks of the bears, otters, and seals. Bears were long ago extirpated from Scotland, and otters are now rarely seen; but seals still occasionally enter the Don in pursuit of salmon. Seal-hunts are among the most interesting of the recollections of my boyhood. When I was at school in Old Aberdeen, which is about a mile from the bridge of Don, a sacred compact, bound the Don boys to send word immediately to the "auld town" boys whenever seals entered the river. The seal-hunt was a thing to be seen at all risks. No amount of flogging for absence from school, it was decided

unanimously, was worthy of a thought in the comparison. Whenever a couple of seals were reported to have entered the Don during the night, a deputation of Don boys ran with the news to the auld town. Generally, however, before the auld town boys reached the scene of action, the female-seal, with the lively instinct of self-preservation characteristic of her sex, had escaped to sea, and the male seal alone was hunted in the water. The salmon-fishers in their boats intercepted his return to the sea. Whenever he popped up his head above the surface to breathe, three or four bullets splashed the water around him. If he tried to pass the line of boats which traversed the river, he was sure to be struck by boat-hooks. Sometimes he would take to land, where he was speedily overtaken, as he runs awkwardly, and he was easily despatched by a blow on the nose. Sometimes a seal would give the Don population an exhilarating occupation and excitement from early morning until late in the evening. The long pauses of silence, while he disappeared under the water, the uncertainty where he would reappear next, the cracks of rifles, and shouts, and cries, when his snout was seen; the discussions whether he had been hit or not, and the chances and vicissitudes of escape or capture made up an excitement and pleasure which well warranted the exclamation of every boy, "when a seal is hunted in the Don, again, may I be there to see." The boy-naturalists who carefully examined the dead or dying seals, decided they were just sea-dogs. When they consulted their books about the phoca, they were astonished to read suppositions that the seals were the sirens of the ancients who attracted men by their mild looks, and deceived and devoured them. The species of the Mediterranean must differ greatly from the species of the northern seas, to prove destructive seducers for men, whatever they may be for fish.

The habits of the salmon direct the occupations of the fishers. During the periods of the year in which they could not fish, the Scandinavians of the Don occupied themselves with farming. Most of them cultivated small farms, or crofts. Both a farmer and fisher a Don man united in himself a considerable range of useful knowledge and practical accomplishment. An education inspector might indeed give a poor report of his acquirements, but the education inspector himself if deprived of his access to the state purse, and thrown upon his own resources, might have proved an inferior man in the equipments absolutely necessary for the battle of life. Reading, writing, summing, Scottish history, political and ecclesiastical, and a knowledge of Calvinistic theology, formed the book lore of every cottage. In the long winter evenings the families visited each other, night about. While the women knitted stockings and the men mended nets,

the old folks discussed the five points of the Calvinistic controversy. Never were they likelier to grow warm than when sharpening each other's wits with knotty points about predestination, free will, necessity, faith and grace. A young man would sometimes try a joust with an old one of established repute, and perhaps seek from the bright eyes of a maiden, demurely knitting in a corner, the acknowledgment that he knew as well as another what stands to reason—"fat stans to riz'n."

"Fat stans to riz'n!" Were I asked to describe the intellectual condition of the Scotch by a phrase, I should say they are the nation who ask what stands to reason. This is an abridgment of the Scottish philosophy in colleges and cottages. The Frenchman, who is still the modern Greek or Roman, asks in reference to a standard of appearance or beauty, the *comme il faut*, and condemns what is ugly, or villain, or bête. The Englishman asks "will it pay?" When an Englishman says, "How do you do?" he has an eye to business; when a Frenchman asks, "*Comment vous portez-vous*," how do you carry yourself, he has appearance, decoration, glory in his mind: and when a Scotchman asks—"Hoo's a' wi' ye?" how is all with you? his all embracing philosophy inquires if everything concerning you accords with the fitness or reason of things. Some years ago, I found myself, rather late in the evening of a fair day, in a dancing-booth in Hertfordshire. The village lads had drunk too much beer. One of them, wishing for a row, began leaping up to the little wooden triangle in which the candles were fixed, to blow them out. Two young men, who were more sober, opposed and thwarted his design—the one, an English groom, asking him, "What will you get by it?" the other, a Scotch gardener, exclaiming, "Hoots min! it does na stand to riz'n,"—fie man! it does not stand to reason. Here is another illustration of the characteristic of the Englishman. It once happened to me to dine at a public dinner at the Freemasons' Tavern, when a series of orators broke down in their speeches. The company preferred their wine and conversation to the orations of the programme. Dismay seized the speechifiers, and it seemed impossible that any one could get on amidst the impatient interruptions which arose from all parts of the hall. The late Lord Nugent turned to me and said, "You'll see they will listen to nobody until some one manages to introduce the word business into the first sentence of his speech." I gave the hint to the next speaker, who did not take it and broke down. Lord Nugent himself, in his turn, got up, and said with a solemn voice, "May it please your Grace, my Lords, and Gentlemen. What I have to say in relation to the business of the evening—" Hear, hear, hear! burst loudly from all sides, and the orators got through their work trium-

phantly. Reason, business, glory, resume three nations in three words.

I return to the cottages of the Don Fishers of a winter evening. Scandinavian and Celtic traditions were repeated by grave voices. The Celts were described as military clans who landed on the Western islands, and spread themselves over the mountains, killing wolves and living upon deer—

A chasing the wild deer and following the roe.

The Scandinavians were described as sea-kings, who landed upon the east coasts, killing bears and seals, and living upon salmon. The highlander was a soldier and a venison-eater, and the Pight (Pict), was a sailor and a salmon-eater. The descendant of the Scandinavian, on the authority of his traditions, denied with indignation the pretension of the Celt, that his ancestors were the less ancient inhabitants of Scotland. He said, compare our numbers, and that will show you that we were here first, and have had the longest time to multiply in the land; the lowlander being a Pight, and the highlander a Celt.

The ballads sung by old people were of a kind I have never read in print. There was one about John o' Noth and John o' Benachie (Noth and Benachie being two mountains in Aberdeenshire), who were described as giants playing at foot-ball with the hills of Scotland. When puzzling my head in after years to find the meaning of this wild chant, I have suspected it was a traditionary lesson in geography, wrapped up in the marvellous and fabulous form of a battle of giants. Wheu men had not books they had rhymes, and sang in a ballad, or condensed into a proverb or a distich, the knowledge which is now spread (often in a plainer form, I grant), over a page. The young women who had sweet voices, sung soft and melancholy songs of domestic interest. What they were, I have forgotten, but I remember they resembled in character the Keel Rows and the Boatie Rows. I fancy I have been familiar from my infancy with such stanzas as,

I cast my line in Largo Bay,
And fishes I caught nine;
There's three to boil, and three to fry,
And three to bait the line.

and again—

The keel rows, the keel rows,—
And better may she speed,
The keel rows, the keel rows,
That wins the bairnies' breed.

The fishers of the Scotch East Coasts have never been degraded by feudal institutions. They inherited the proud independence of the sea-kings. Never *adscriпти glebi*, and never calling any man "My Lord," there was no trace in their manners of pauperism, prostitution, or profligacy. When worshippers of Odin, their marriages were contracted by handfasting and troth-plighting in presence of their relatives, and beside the pillar of the gode or chief. Long after the Papal form of

Christianity was imposed upon Scotland by the sword, when a marriage turned out unsatisfactorily it was dissolved by the one party going out by the north and the other by the south door of the parish church. All laws and institutions must be viewed to be understood in reference to the moral spirit and public opinion of the populations governed by them. The indignation of the Don people against domestic treason was terrible. When their fierce puritanism was rebuked by the milder liberalism of the nineteenth century, they answered, "You will never in any other way keep up a breed of men fit to fight the French." The Scandinavians, Northmen, or Normans have been for a thousand years the masters of Gauls and Saxons, and their notions are worthy of the consideration of physiologists and statesmen. Thirty or forty years after I was taught the opinions of the Don folks, I listened to lectures of celebrated professors of physiology in the French metropolis, who described and deplored the results of opposite maxims and different manners among the French youth, and the substance of their science was this—"with our liberal morals, we shall never have a race fit to keep the foreigner out of Paris."

THE GRAVE IN THE MOORLAND.

Low lieth it, long grass upon it waving,
Wide lieth it, storm-winds around it raving:
No stone marketh it: it is all alone,
The day and the night through alone, alone.
Upon the northern slope of the black-fell
Deep hidden midst the purple heather swell;
A little mound, unhallowed, all alone
The day and the night through, alone, alone.

No foot seeketh it: it heareth no sound of weeping,
No heart guardeth it, a faithful vigil keeping.
They who loved it are gone—all dead and gone,
They have their rest 'neath graven stone;
It hath the snows, and winds, and rains of God
Moaning for ever on its lonely sod;
They have their cross and crown—it is alone,
The day and the night through, alone, alone.

Unquiet heart! proud, sinful, maddened heart!
Is rest with thee, poor, broken, weary heart?
Or hath its dust a throb and pant of pain—
Hast thou ta'en Death unto thyself in vain?
When men speak of thee, they speak hushed and low,
As if they feared that sounds could come and go
From them to where thou liest all alone
The day and the night through alone, alone.

When the white shimmer of the moonlight glideth
Along the lonely fells, the darkness hideth
About thy grave, thy wild, unholy grave;
No angel step resteth beside thy grave.
The sunshine, morn, noon, eve, doth pass it by,
The rank grass waveth, but no flowers grow nigh,
Nor God nor man cometh, it is alone
The day and the night through alone, alone.

O! coward heart, that couldst not strive nor hear,
Thou wast weary, weary of despair.
Thou wouldst have rest, and now thou art alone,
The day and the night through, alone, alone.

Thy name haunteth a memory here and there,
Lips breathe it like a curse upon the air,
None, with love, remember thee—thou art alone
The day and the night through, alone, alone,
Ever alone.

ERIC WALDERTHORN.

IN SEVEN CHAPTERS. CHAPTER THE FIRST.

"ERIC!"

"Carl!"

These exclamations of surprise proceeded from the lips of two young men, who, after disencumbering themselves from various wrappings of cloaks and furs, found themselves suddenly face to face, in the middle of the coffee-room of one of the principal hotels of Stettin. In their haste to approach the fire, which was blazing as merrily as logs heaped with coal could blaze, they had nearly knocked each other down, and it was in turning simultaneously to ask each other pardon that they had each recognised a well-known face. The light fell full upon their animated countenances and sparkling eyes, as they stood in the middle of the room, their right hands locked in a hearty grasp, and their left still placed where they had seized each other by the shoulder. They were both fine specimens of early manhood. One, the tallest of the two, had a noble Teuton countenance. Rich brown hair fell back from a forehead of the finest intellectual development, whilst beneath eyebrows of a somewhat darker hue, looked forth large eyes of deep violet, which, whatever expression they might wear in repose, now beamed and flashed almost as brightly as the fire. The other, who had been addressed as Carl, had a Saxon countenance, the fair hair, the bright blue eye, the rounded chin, and, despite the fair skin, the bold fearless bearing which distinguish that hardy race amongst all others.

"Why, Eric," said this last, "it seems but yesterday that I parted with you in sunny Rome. I little thought to have met with you here, in the frost and snow of a Pomeranian winter."

"And little did I expect to meet you here to-night, my dear Carl. Where are you going?"

"I am going to Rabenstein, to the house of a friend who lives in the neighbourhood. I made his acquaintance in Munich last winter, and he promised me, if I would go and see him, to give me some wolf-hunting. And, as I was tired of Paris and the Carnival, I thought I would try Rabenstein by way of a change."

"A change, I should say, very much more to your taste, my Carl. But you are going my way; why not come with me, an old friend, instead of going to see this new friend? I am on my road to Kronenthal, as you may guess. Ernst is going to be married, and I am to be his best-man. Come with me; you will be a most welcome guest, and we can

have some wolf-hunting together. My brother has a rare pack of hounds. Have you told your friend to expect you?"

"Oh no," answered Carl. "I reserved to myself the privilege of accepting anything by the way, I might meet with more attractive; and I would rather go to Kronenthal with you, who have asked me to accompany you there so often. But your brother—what will he say to the presence of a stranger on an occasion when none but friends are usually present?"

"Ernst will make you heartily welcome; besides you are not so great a stranger to him as you may think. I have often spoken of you to him in my letters, and he generally asks after my friend Carl, the eccentric young Englishman."

"Too bad of you, Eric," said Carl: "I dare say you have given him a fine character of me."

"I have told him, Carl," said Eric, laying his hand on his friend's arm, as they both stood near the fire, "what you are to me, my dearest, best, and truest friend. Ah, Carl! many a time but for your encouraging voice prompting me to fresh efforts, I should have despaired of myself. It was you, and you only, who enabled me to battle with the arduous trials which beset my path as an artist, and now—"

"And now, dear Eric, you are what you would always have become, with me or without me, not only an artist heart and soul, but one who possesses the power to render his ideas visible. And this, owing solely to your own undaunted courage, energy, perseverance, and strong faith in yourself, under and through great difficulties. But, come, what do you say to some dinner? I am furiously hungry. What a keen air one breathes in these night rides."

"By all means let us have something to eat, Carl; but it must only be a hasty snatch, for we have another ride before us. I want to get to Kronenthal to-night. Ernst is to send his travelling sleigh for me. It will be a glorious ride by this glorious moonlight. The distance is but three leagues."

"Don't go to-night, Eric, it is so comfortable here, and I had made up my mind to remain here to-night. It is cold out there, and I am tired; I have come a good long distance to-day."

"Don't have one of your lazy fits, Carl; we will have something to eat, and after that you will be all ready for a fresh start. I know you Englishmen; you are something like your own horses; there is nothing like a good feed for putting your mettle up."

So the young men rang the bell; and the waiter appearing, something to eat was ordered to appear as quickly as possible. Whilst it was being prepared, a cloth, which rivalled the snow outside, was spread on a table, drawn up close to the fire; and the young men chatted as young men do, who

have lived together the rich artist-life of classical Rome.

"By the way," said Eric, interrupting himself, "waiter, can you tell me whether any message has arrived from Kronenthal for me, from Baron Ernst Walderthorn?"

"I cannot say, honoured sir," replied the waiter; "I will inquire of Herr Wirkmann, the landlord."

"Do," said Eric, and the waiter vanished, to re-appear presently, ushering in no less a personage than Herr Wirkmann himself, whose bald polished head shone again in the bright light of the blazing fire.

"Noble sirs," said he, bowing low to the two young men, "to whom shall I give the letter, directed to the hands of the well-born Eric Walderthorn, arrived to-day from the honourable castle of Kronenthal?"

"To me, worthy Herr Wirkmann. I am Eric Walderthorn. So the sleigh is here, mine host?" said Eric, after reading the letter.

"Yes, honoured sir, and will be ready whenever your excellency chooses to order it."

"Then let it be made ready at once," said Eric, and the landlord withdrawing, the young men sat down, and discussed, with keen relish, the excellent production of the kitchen of mine host of the Geldernstern, worthy Herr Wirkmann.

In less than half an hour, they again stood at the door of the hotel, wrapped up in their cloaks and furs. Before the door, a sleigh was drawn up, well-lined with skins of the reindeer: while two huge black bearskins lay all ready to form the outer wrappings of the travellers. Two fine grey horses, evidently of the English breed, pawed the ground impatiently, and snorted, anxious to be off. Their crimson body cloths, ornamented with silver, sparkled in the bright moonlight, and the silver bells which hung from their head-gear, filled the rarefied air with fairy-like music every time they tossed their heads.

"What a pretty turn-out," said Carl, biting off the end of his cigar previous to lighting it; "I give your brother credit for his taste, Eric."

"Ernst is a fine fellow every way," replied Eric, "and you will say so when you know him, Carl. Herr landlord, are the pistols put in?"

"Yes, honoured sir, they are here," replied the landlord, pointing to the holsters fastened on each side of the reversed dashing-board.

"All right," said Eric.

"Pistols! do we expect to meet robbers?" said Carl, laughing.

"The wolves have been very troublesome this winter, honoured sir," returned the landlord; "but since the last grand hunt to which his excellency's brother, the noble baron, treated them, they have not been quite so obstreperous."

"What a chance, if we could get a shot at a wolf to-night," said Carl. "And what a night! how bright the moon is! and the air how clear! One might see anything by such a light."

Carl stepped into the sleigh. Eric, gathering up the reins, settled down into his place; the bear-skins were spread over them, and tucked in all round; and then, with a Good night to all, responded to by a chorus of grooms and stable-helpers, who had gathered round to see the handsome sleigh and the beautiful English horses, he gave a touch of the lash to these last, and they bounded forward: the sleigh skating smoothly over the frozen snow. The silver harness glittered in the bright moonshine, and the silver bells tinkled merrily in the cold night air, as they left the streets of Stettin, and emerged into the open country beyond.

For some time they proceeded in silence, as if each were communing with his own thoughts, or were awed by the deep stillness of the night. Not a sound was to be heard, not a creature to be seen. They seemed to be traversing a vast desert of snow. Everything was wrapped in the same dazzling uniform, by which the eye was almost pained. The light of the moon reflected from the thousand points of snow, sparkling like silver in its rays, was increased to an intensity which almost equalled the light of day. The trees of the forest, along which they now skirted, stretched out their branches, encased in sheaths of glittering crystal. At first, the moon reigned alone in the deep blue sky; but now, small fleecy clouds began to appear, every now and then overshadowing her brightness. Presently a low moaning sound began to make itself heard, as if the wind were rising in the depths of the leafless forest. Eric seemed to listen uneasily, and to watch anxiously these ominous signs.

"I hope we shall reach Kronenthal before a snow-storm sets in," said Carl, "I have no desire to be buried in a snow-wreath."

"I do not think it will be here so soon," answered his companion, "though I expect we shall have it here before long. The sky looks a little brighter again now. However, I will drive the horses as fast as they like to go."

So saying Eric touched their flanks slightly with the long lash of the sleigh whip, giving them their heads at the same time. The noble creatures again bounded forward with a speed which promised to outstrip all pursuers, snow-storms included.

"By the way, Eric," said Carl, breaking the silence after some time, "what became of your last spring adventure? Did you ever see the lady of the Sistine chapel again? And did you find out who she was?"

"Yes, and no," said Eric. "Yes to the question as to whether I ever saw her again. I saw her three times after you and I saw her that morning, but I never could find out who

she was, or where she had gone to, and I did not even wish to find out after a time."

"Not wish to find out, Eric? I thought you were madly in love with her, even the first time you saw her."

"Call it love I felt for her then, if you like, Carl; but it is with a holier feeling I think of her now, than any earthly passion. It seems more to me now, as if she had been the vision of some saint or angel. I have her still before me there; those heavenly blue eyes upturned in rapt devotion; those twining locks of pure gold descending on the falling shoulders! I was very glad when she disappeared from Rome. Those three visits of hers to the gallery where I was making that study of Canova, nearly drove me wild. Day after day I looked for her anxiously; and nearly gave up everything to hunt her out; but my better angel prevailed: I righted myself at last, and recovered, not only my serenity, but also my communion with the spiritual, which is so essential to the life of an artist who would accomplish anything, and which at one time I seemed to have almost lost."

"What have you done with the sketch you made of her, kneeling in the chapel, with the dark background of the long aisle behind her. I thought you were going to make a picture from it, and send it to the exhibition."

"The picture is finished, and I have brought it for my mother's oratory. I could not summon up the courage to send it where it would be stared at by a hundred indifferent eyes. I could not bear to let others have a glimpse of a vision which seemed so entirely my own. Except you, Carl, no one knows I ever saw her; and I doubt much, if you had not been with me that morning, whether I should ever have told you, much as you are to me."

"Well," said Carl, taking the end of his cigar out of his mouth, and lighting another with it, "if that is not what is called being in love, I do not know what it is. What would you care who knew what impression she had made on you, if you did not love her?"

"I do not love her, Carl, and I do not wish to love her."

"Not wish to love her! Why, Eric, what on earth do you mean?"

"Would you have me find that my angel, my vision of purity and holiness, was nothing but a mere woman, perhaps a captious one, too; enough to drive one mad with whims and follies of all sorts. Besides I never mean to be in love if I can help it. But, hark! What is that?"

"It is the moaning of the wind," said Carl. "No!" he exclaimed, springing up in his seat, as a shrill, wild, piercing cry for help, rang through the still night. "Hear that cry?"

"Sit down Carl, I beseech you, said Eric, you will upset the sleigh! Look at the horses how they tremble. I can scarcely

manage them as it is, they are so wild. That is the baying of a hound, a wolf-hound," he said, listening to fresh sounds, his head bent, at the same time that he kept urging his horses on, continually and smartly applying the lash to them, without which goad they would certainly have come to a stand-still. "That is the yell of a wolf!" he exclaimed, as a loud yell reached their ears, whilst wild shrieks again followed in quick succession, and then a cry of agony and terror, so prolonged, that the blood froze in the veins of the listeners.

"That is the cry of a horse beset by wolves," said Carl, the truth now flashing upon him. "Let me out, Eric, let me out, that I may fly to their assistance. Where is my rifle?"

"Sit still, Carl, I implore of you; our only chance of getting up to them in time for help, is to trust to the speed of our horses, if I can only keep them going. Get the pistols ready; they are loaded. Can you manage to get at my hunting-knife? it is in the case which the landlord put under the seat."

"All right," said Carl, who having secured the weapons, now sat, his teeth clenched, his eyes straining forward in the direction from which the cries seemed to come.

"There they are," he exclaimed at last, "right a-head. Heaven! there is a sleigh and two women in it; the horses are on the ground, and there is a battle going on between a wolf and a large hound."

The bright light of the moon revealed the scene distinctly to the eyes of the two young men. Eric forced his now frantic horses alongside the sleigh which Carl had described. Standing upright in this was a young girl, clasping in her arms another, who appeared to have fainted. Her hood and cloak had fallen off, and her golden curls streamed in the winds from under a light blue Polish cap, bordered with ermine; her large blue eyes were raised to Heaven as if seeking from thence that help which her wild cries had vainly implored from Earth.

Eric stood for an instant transfixed in amazement, but it was only for an instant, the next moment both he and Carl had sprung to the ground.

"Lay hold of the horses' heads, Carl! Don't let them go, for God's sake! We shall need their best speed soon."

Seizing his pistols and the hunting-knife, Eric ran round to the side where the battle was going on between a large wolf and a magnificent wolf-hound. This latter had seized his antagonist by the throat with a gripe the wolf tried in vain to escape from. They now rolled over and over on the snow together; fierce snorts coming from the hound, and faint stifled cries from the wolf. As Eric approached the scene of the fray, two wolves who had been gorging themselves on

a prostrate horse lying behind the ladies' sleigh, sprang fiercely upon him. These, however, he soon dispatched, after some little difficulty; one he shot through the brain, so close to his own face, that the flash of the pistol scorched his eyes; the other received a thrust from his hunting-knife, which penetrated his lungs, and he fell beside his companion suffocated in his own blood. Eric once more free, approached to the help of the noble hound. It was well nigh time. The wolf had extricated his throat from his teeth; and was now making strenuous efforts to free himself from the gripe which the desperate hound still fastened on him. It was some time before Eric could give him any help, so closely were the two antagonists locked together. At last, watching his opportunity, he was able by a well-directed blow to plunge his knife into him. The wolf rolled over and over, dyeing the trampled snow with the life-blood streaming from his wound. The hound rose slowly, shook himself well, and then rushed to the sleigh and leapt fawning upon his young mistress.

Meanwhile, Carl struggled manfully with the plunging horses. It required the full strength of his nervous arm to keep them from galloping off wildly to the forest. But when the scuffle with the wolves was over, and Eric came round covered with blood and snow, he patted them, and the sound of his voice quieted them.

Eric then flew to the side of the ladies' sleigh. The wolf-hound stood with his paws on his mistress's knees, vainly trying to induce her to look up. She had sunk back on her seat. Her face was concealed in her hands, and she wept aloud. Her companion, still insensible, lay beside her, totally unconscious of the deliverance which had been wrought for them.

"Gracious lady," said Eric, in his gentlest tones, "you are safe now. Will you not look up and tell me whether there are any more of your party in need of our assistance?"

The young girl looked up, and said through her tears, that there were two men servants with them; that one of them, who had been driving, had been thrown out of the sleigh when the wolves first attacked them, and another on horseback, after trying in vain to stop the horses who had galloped off in affright, had disappeared all at once, and she did not know what had become of him.

"Here he is!" said Carl, who having contrived to fasten Eric's horses, so that they should not escape, was searching in the wrecks around them. "Here is a poor fellow half smothered under his horse. I think the horse is dead. Yes; his throat is cut—no doubt, by the wolves' teeth."

"That is what those brutes were about when they jumped upon me, as I came round," said Eric, stooping to help Carl to remove the dead horse from the top of his rider, in

which operation they were assisted by the wolf-hound, who alternately scratched in the snow and fawned upon Eric. When they had succeeded in getting the man disinterred from the mass which half suffocated him, they found he was quite whole as far as bones were concerned; but so bruised he could hardly stand. Whilst they were busy with him, another man ran up from the direction of the forest.

"God be thanked!" he said, "are the young ladies safe? Noble gentlemen, you have saved us all from death. I was thrown out of the sleigh a quarter of a mile away—when the horses first bolted. Heaven be praised for your arrival. I expected to find my dear young mistress dead."

All this had taken some time. The wind now blew in strong gusts, and the clouds were coming up fast before it.

"We must decide what had better be done next, Carl," said Eric; "we have no time to lose, the storm will be upon us soon. I think the ladies had better go back to Stettin in our sleigh, it is the nearest shelter. If you will drive them I will get these fallen horses up, and will follow you with the man who is hurt, as soon as I can."

But Carl insisted on staying behind. Eric pleaded the coming storm.

"You do not know, my Carl, what a snow-storm is; I do. Let me remain to get the horses up and bring the sleigh back, while you make the best of your way to Stettin with the ladies; and send more assistance to us; but if we make haste, we shall be in Stettin now, before it comes."

It was of no use. Carl was inexorable as fate, he said—

"You had better lose no more time, Eric; but take the ladies as fast as you can."

He helped Eric to put them in the sleigh. The lady who had fainted, had now partly recovered and sat close nestled beside her sister. There was scarcely room for three; they were obliged to sit close. They were now ready for a start, and Eric, pressing Carl's hand, said:

"I shall be back in less than an hour. Make haste, dear Carl, and whatever you do, keep moving. I know you do not want for energy and a strong will. Have you your cigar-case? Is it well furnished?"

"Yes, here it is, and plenty of cigars; and here is the brandy-flask. I shall do well enough, don't fear."

Eric turned the horses' heads in the direction of Stettin. He had no need to touch their flanks now with the lash. They flew back along the road they had so lately come, winged with the double terror of wolves and the coming storm. The sleigh glanced over the ground like lightning. The wind now raged in furious squalls, tore off the icy branches of the trees and showered them on the heads of the fugitives.

"We shall have a frightful storm, I am

afraid," said his golden-haired companion, who now sat next to him, muffled up in her cloak and hood. "O, why have you left your friend to save us: your friend whom you seem to love so dearly. Do, do, let us go back; it is not too late; we will wait till he is ready to come with us."

At this moment, the moon broke through the thick mass of clouds driving before her, and fell full upon the upturned face of the beautiful speaker. Eric gazed down upon her in mute rapture; but, for only answer to her entreaties to go back to wait for Carl, he shook the reins, as he raised his head from that silent gaze. On they flew, and the ringing of the silver bells, sounded faintly through the increasing din of the coming storm. On they flew, and alongside the sleigh the noble wolf-hound galloped in company.

Eric's head seemed to whirl, he thought he must be dreaming. She, she sat behind him, she who had been his thoughts for months, by day, by night; she, his pure vision; he had rescued her from a frightful death; he was carrying her away from the dreadful storm; and, now, there she sat, and whenever he turned to look at her, her blue eyes swimming in tears, sank before his ardent gaze. His heart beat fast, his eyes flashed with an emotion which seemed too great for words. He sat silent till the light of Stettin gleamed through the darkness before them; and now they stood before the door of the *Goldstenern*.

In a moment, all its inhabitants were astir. Every one poured out to inquire why the beautiful grey horses were returned. Every one questioned, every one answered. The wolf-hound jumped up, and fawned upon Eric, as he handed the ladies out of the sleigh; and amidst the confused words of "the wolves—the gracious ladies—the noble hound—the storm—the broken sleigh—the snow wreaths;" the panting horses were led back to the stable, and the rescued ladies and the well-patted hound, to a room blazing with light, and the genial warmth of a comfortable fire.

Eric did not follow them, but as soon as he had consigned them to the care of the landlady, he called the landlord, who, after listening to him with respect, said, "Yes, your excellency," and vanished. In a few minutes, a saddle-horse was led to the door, and the landlord, after placing some pistols in the holsters, looked to the girths himself, and held the stirrup whilst Eric mounted, and watched him along until he had vanished down the street.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

WHEN the rescued ladies, who were evidently sisters, were left alone in the room to which they had been conducted, they threw themselves into each other's arms, and kissed each other with an affection heightened by the joy of their miraculous escape. She who

had fainted in the sleigh, seemed a year or two older than the sister who had supported her in her arms. She had hair rather darker than that of her sister, but there was a great likeness between them; and, except that she was a little taller, a stranger would have been puzzled for a time to distinguish between them. On closer observation, however, he would have found that they were different, especially in their eyes—those of the tallest being of a deep brown, whilst those of her younger sister were of that beautiful deep blue, which had so fascinated Eric's gaze.

"O, Marie, Marie!" said the eldest to her golden-haired sister, "you must have thought it so cowardly in me to faint."

"No, dear Katrine! I never thought it cowardly. The sight was frightful enough. I certainly did feel when you had fainted, as if you were dead, and I were left alone in the world; left to the mercy of the horrible wolves. And, yet, not alone, either; did I forget you, dear old Schwartz?" and the beautiful girl, kneeling down, flung her arms round the neck of the wolf-hound, who had been thrusting his black nose into her small white hand.

"Ah, noble Schwartz! ah, dear Schwartz! brave hound," said Katrine, kneeling in her turn to pat and kiss the delighted animal, whose huge feathery tail swept backwards and forwards on the ground.

"Katrine, do you know," said Marie, rising from beside the dog, "who it was that came to our rescue?"

"No," said her sister. "I did not see him at first, when the moon shone so brightly, and afterwards as we were in the sleigh with him it was so dark."

"But I saw him well, there was no mistaking him; it was no less a person than our Roman artist; do you remember? He who followed us out of the Sistine chapel?"

"O, yes!" answered Katrine, "he I called your innamorato; the one we saw afterwards in the gallery, copying that beautiful statue of Canova."

"Well, well, you need not laugh at me, Katrine; you were quite as much struck with him as I was. I am not surprised at it now. Do you not see the likeness?"

"Likeness! to whom, dear Marie?"

"Why, to Ernst—Ernst Waldert Thorn. I knew there was something more than usual which attracted me to him. Depend upon it, he is Eric Waldert Thorn, the brother whom Ernst is expecting so anxiously from Rome. And he was driving Ernst's greys, Oscar and Harold."

"Do you think he knew us?"

"That was not possible, Katrine dear. It must be years since he saw us, and I sat a child of six years old on his knee, and he was a boy of fourteen. How many years ago is that, ten or twelve?"

"Twelve, it must be; of course that makes a wonderful difference between a little girl of six and a woman of eighteen."

"It must be Eric. We will ask the landlady when she comes in again, if she knows him. How surprised he will be when he finds out who we are, and that it is his brother's bride whom he has rescued from such a fearful death."

"We must not let him know who we are, Marie," said Katrine. "Only fancy what his surprise will be when Ernst presents him to us."

"But how can we keep our name from him? He must know it already."

"No, I do not think he does; the people here do not know us. We will give him our mother's name."

"But Fritz and Wilhelm, Katrine?" pleaded Marie.

"O, I will give them their lesson. I must go and see poor Fritz when he comes in; I am afraid he is badly hurt. O, here comes Madame Wirkmann; let us ask her about Eric."

The landlady came in preceding the servants, bringing in the equipage for tea and coffee, and fresh wood and coals for the fire.

"It was a wonderful escape, gracious ladies," said the smiling landlady, in answer to a remark of Katrine's, "and he is a noble gentleman who came to your rescue. But it was just what one would have expected of a Waldert Thorn. They are all brave; all strong; all handsome. God bless him and his brother, the young Baron of Kronenthal."

"So, this is young Eric Waldert Thorn?" said Katrine. "We had our suspicions it was he; it was so very likely to be him."

"He is very like the young baron, saving your presence, gracious lady; only he is taller."

"Will you tell him that when he is at leisure, Katrine and Marie von Mellenthin would like to see him, to express their gratitude to him for the great service he has rendered them to-night?"

"Ah, that I will, noble lady—ah, that I will. Beautiful ladies' thanks are due to handsome, noble gentlemen, who risk their lives for them. As soon as he returns, I will let him know your wishes."

"Return!" said Marie. "Is he gone?"

"He is gone to look after his friend, who remained behind to conduct your Grace's sleigh and your wounded servant. He was uneasy about him because of the storm. Ah, how it rages!"

It was true. The storm was raging fearfully. The wind swept up the streets, and howled and raved round the houses. Marie from the window, saw nothing before her but thick darkness, through which the lamps in the streets of Stettin glimmered faintly and flickered to-and-fro in the strong blast; as she stood there, vainly striving to pierce the darkness with her eyes, the hail rattled against the window, the fierce sleet cut the glass, the wind raged, the thunder rolled.

Meanwhile Eric rode for life, for death

His heart sank within him when he thought of Carl, exposed to the whole fury of the storm! How it raged in his face! The fierce wind blew into it that fine, sharp-cutting, pointed snow, so well known to those who have been out in like storms; and hurled at his head frozen branches, which it had snapped off in its fury as it swept past him howling madly. On, on he rode, his gallant horse answering the spur with fresh bounds, though it was with great difficulty he could keep his feet; and once, when a gust of wind came up fiercer than ever, the poor creature turned completely round; he could not face it. It was well for both horse and rider that their road lay alongside the forest; the tall black skeletons served as a landmark for them in the wild dreary waste of snow before them, though it was no shelter to them, as the storm swept over the wide plain which lay to their left. "Carl! Carl!" shouted Eric; "He never can weather such a storm," he thought; "he has never seen anything like it! Why did I leave him!"

At length he thought he saw something black moving slowly towards him. To his infinite joy and relief, he discovered it to be the sleigh he had come in search of. "Steady there, steady!" he heard, in the native language and deep tones of his friend's voice; "Who, my brave lads!" as his horses shied at the approach of Eric; and then there was a shout of recognition.

"I knew," said Eric, "you would clear the sleigh, and bring your company along safe; but I feared you might lose your way and perish, this wild night."

"Don't say another word," said Carl. "You had better come into the sleigh and drive; you know the road better than I do, and I want to enjoy my cigar after all my fatigue. These horses are not so fresh as yours were, Eric. I suppose terror, poor brutes, has taken it out of them."

So Eric got into the sleigh, and the manservant who had been thrown out in the first encounter with the wolves, rode his horse back. Carl reclined lazily, and smoked a cigar, in spite of the snow and the raging wind; though it was not quite so bad when their backs were turned to it. Eric, with a heart bounding with joy, and every nerve tingling with emotion, leant towards the horses, and urged them on with voice and hand. They sprang forward as if imbued with his own energy. At the entrance of Stettin they met a party despatched to their help. Right glad were they to return, for it was almost impossible for men on foot to advance against such a storm.

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

Arrived at the hotel, the bruised servant was led up-stairs, and got into bed. Carl and Eric, ushered by the landlord, found themselves in a room prepared for them, and with cigars and spirits on the table, and

slippers by the fire, sat down to enjoy the repose they had well earned.

"Carl," said Eric, between the whiffs of the meerschaum he was smoking, "do you know who the ladies are whom we rescued to-night?"

"No," said Carl, knocking the ashes off his cigar with his finger. "I was just going to ask you." And he leant back in the deep arm chair, and stretched his feet out before the fire.

"I don't suppose you will ever guess. It is she!"

"Who?"

"The lady of the Sistine Chapel!" answered Eric; "my dream—my vision! I knew her at once as she stood there, her golden curls streaming in the wind, and her beautiful blue eyes raised to Heaven. As we came along, I think she recognised me."

"And what is her name?"

"I did not ask her. I must find out to-night."

"Not ask her her name," said Carl, raising his eyes in astonishment. "What were you talking about so earnestly, that you forgot to ask her name?"

"Nothing," said Eric. "She said a great deal to me about taking her back, so that I might help you, and wait till you were ready to come back with us."

"Much obliged to her, I am sure, for taking so much interest in me. And what did you say in answer to her proposal?"

"Nothing," said Eric.

"Nothing, Eric—nothing? What were you thinking about so intently, that you could not answer her?"

"I am not sure," said he, looking puzzled.

"Well, this must end in love, I should think, if it is not already begun," said Carl. "She must, out of pure gratitude, love the handsome knight who so gallantly came to her rescue, and is yet so daunted by her eyes that he cannot speak to her."

"I suppose it is fate," said Eric.

"And a very pleasant fate, my dear fellow, to fall in love with a beautiful girl, with the not improbable hope that she may return your affection. But I should like to know the name of your beautiful lady with the golden locks; let us ask the landlord."

"I never thought of that," said Eric.

"Of course not," returned Carl, laughing. "Who ever heard of a lover doing anything half so matter-of-fact!"

The landlord now came in, followed by a waiter bearing a savoury supper. It seemed as if worthy Herr Wirkmann could not do honour enough to the young man who first rescued the ladies, and then braved the storm to go to the assistance of his friend.

"You seem to know the ladies we were so fortunate as to save from the wolves, host? Can you tell us who they are, and what are their names; and do they live in this neighbourhood?" asked Eric, of the hospitable landlord, now busy superintending the placing of the supper on the table.

"Yes, noble sir," answered the host. "I believe they live at Strahlen; they are two sisters, the ladies Marie and Katrine von Mellinthen—at least, so my wife told me, for we had not seen them before to-night—and they told my wife their name was Mel-lenthin, and there are no Mellenthins live nearer than Strahlen, and that is a good twenty leagues off."

"Which is Marie?" asked Carl—"the lady with the golden curls?"

"Yes, noble sir; the lady Katrine has darker hair, and darker eyes than her sister. It was she who fainted."

"Marie is a beautiful name, and suits her well," said Carl.

"I believe the ladies would like to see you to-night, noble gentlemen," said the landlord. "They were very anxious when they heard your excellency had gone back into the storm. The beautiful lady Marie was speechless with terror, and was only pacified when she heard you were returned."

Eric's countenance flushed with strong emotion. Joy beamed from his dark eyes. Carl looked at him, and smiled mischievously.

"I suppose I am not to go?" said Carl. "I dare say the ladies never saw me," he continued, with an air of mock despondency.

"O yes, noble sir, but they did! Made-moiselle Marie saw you hold the plunging horses at the risk of your life, and she wants particularly to see the friend for whom the noble Eric Waldert Thorn risked his life in the storm. She told my wife that she thought he must love and value you like a brother."

Eric and Carl looked at each other and smiled, while their hands met in a friendly grip.

"We have seen some danger and some trouble together, worthy Herr Wirkmann," said Carl, "and that always makes men friends."

"Noble sirs," observed the landlord, "the gracious ladies bade me say they would be glad to see you after your supper; there will be coffee in their apartment if you will do them the honour to partake of it."

Carl and Eric despatched their suppers in all haste, and then following a waiter whom they had summoned, they found themselves in the room where the two ladies were expecting them.

Katrine was kneeling down bathing Schwartz's ear, which had been torn in the affray with the wolf; Marie, kneeling beside her, held him round the neck; their servant, Wilhelm—the man who had been thrown out of the sleigh—stood beside them, holding a bowl containing warm water.

The sisters rose on the entrance of the two young men, and Marie blushing, and looking more lovely than ever with joy beaming in her face, came forward hastily towards Eric, holding out both her hands. Eric took them, and pressed them in his own with a fervour partaking of the two-fold nature of his feelings for her,—the

spiritual devotion he had borne towards her so long, and the more human passion struggling for mastery in his breast, now when he found his cherished dream a reality. He pressed the offered hand of Katrine, receiving their grateful thanks with a manly embarrassment, presenting at the same time his friend, Carl.

"His name is not Carl, exactly," said Eric; "but as he always laughs at me whenever I attempt to pronounce his English name, I have always called him Carl."

"And what is your unpronounceable name?" asked Marie, smiling.

"Charles Tomestone," answered Carl, laughing; "Eric cannot say anything but 'Charles,' so we have made an arrangement that I am to be Carl for him, and he has further germanised my name, and calls me Carl Tohanson."

"So you are German, after all, you see," said Katrine, "and now that you have killed some wolves and been out in a snow-storm, you are quite naturalised."

"I am so glad you are a German," said Marie; "I like my friends to be German; here is a third who fought in our defence; Schwartz, dear Schwartz!" and she patted the head of the handsome wolf-hound, who, on Eric's entrance, had jumped up to greet him. "See!" she continued, to Eric, "he recognises you who killed his antagonist."

Eric stooped to pat Schwartz's head, and in so doing touched Marie's hand by accident. Their eyes met, Eric's heart throbbed violently, and when, at Katrine's invitation, he sat down and took the coffee presented to him, his hand shook so much that, had it not been for Carl, he would have dropped the cup on the ground.

"You know we are old acquaintances," said Katrine, laughing, to Eric. "Do you not remember three ladies in the Sistine Chapel, last spring?"

"I recognised you the moment I saw your sister. And my friend Carl, he was with me that morning. But there was another lady with you."

"That was our aunt," said Marie. "It was returning from her house to-night that we were beset by the wolves, when you came so opportunely to our help."

"No wonder that we remarked your countenance in the Sistine Chapel," said Katrine, "You are so like your brother, the Baron Ernst."

"Do you know Ernst?" asked Eric, quickly. The sisters looked at each other and smiled. "Oh, yes; a little."

The two friends sat talking with the sisters till late. They found so many things to talk of; and Schwartz sat before Eric, looking up into his face, switching his great tail on the floor, as if he knew him.

When Carl and Eric met at breakfast the next morning, the snow still fell fast. All travelling was out of the question; there

was nothing for it but to wait patiently till it cleared up. Even then Eric acknowledged that it would be a day or two before the snow would be fit for travelling. Fortunately, Carl had materials for painting with him, so Eric sat down and employed himself in making a sketch of the scene with the wolves, of the night before. Carl came and looked over his shoulder.

"That is it," he said; "but don't you think, Eric, it would be as well to ask Mademoiselle Marie to sit for her portrait? It would make the thing more complete. It really is perfect. It is the scene itself. And the dark group of the hounds and the wolf! I think, though, Schwartz would not be quite satisfied with his portrait if he saw it. Let us ask his black seigneurie to favour us with a sitting."

When the sisters heard what Eric was about, they asked to be allowed to see the picture, and Eric was obliged to finish it in their room, where Schwartz, very gravely, sat for his portrait. Carl made a small model of him for Katrine, who received it with a well-pleased smile.

"I will make one life-size for you, when I return to Rome;" he said, "I feel in a very industrious mood. I will have him struggling with the wolf."

It was not to be supposed that Eric saw so much of Marie with impunity. Whenever their eyes met, a strange spasm passed through his breast, and he could not even speak to her without embarrassment. On the afternoon of the second day, the snow had quite ceased, and the strong easterly wind which still remained promised to harden the snow, so as to make it fit to tread in a few hours. The blacksmith had repaired the sleigh of the two sisters; he had been had at work in the inn-yard for an hour, and Eric had been sketching him for Marie. It was fixed that they should leave Stettin the next morning. Katrine was gone to see if Fritz was well enough to accompany them, and had left Marie in their room reading. A knock was heard at the door, and Marie said, "Come in."

The door opened and Eric appeared. When he saw Marie alone in the room, he stood there irresolute; not knowing whether to advance or retreat. As Marie raised her eyes from her book he came forward. "I—I forgot my pencil," he said, "and we are packing up the drawing-materials."

"Is this it?" said Marie, rising and coming forward with it in her hands. "I found it on the table."

Eric did not look at the pencil; he looked at the hand, and from the hand he looked at the face. She held out the pencil, and he took, not the pencil only, but the hand with it. She did not withdraw it; he felt it tremble in his. In another moment his arm was round her waist, and his lips were pressed to her forehead.

"We shall meet sooner than you expect," said Katrine, gaily, in answer to Carl, who asked them if they were going all the way to Strahlen that day, when he and Eric escorted the sisters to their sleigh next morning. Marie was silent; but, when Eric tucked the warm furs round her, the smile she gave him, said something for all that.

CHIP.

PASTOR RHADAMANTHUS.

THE Reverend Pastor Rhadamanthus lives in a pit village among the colliers; and, as rector of his parish, receives only about two hundred and fifty pounds a-year for the care of upwards of eight thousand souls. He is, of course, unable to afford a curate, and has all the parish work to do himself. This rector is an amiable man; who, to increase his influence among the people, and give himself, as he supposed, a position in society higher than that of parish clergyman, sought and obtained an appointment upon the commission of the peace. He shines, therefore, as the Reverend Justice Rhadamanthus. He devotes the whole of his time, with exemplary diligence, to the discharge of those duties which he considers most consistent with his dignity; attends to his business as a county magistrate in all sorts of places; never misses a meeting of the bench; but ministers little, or not at all, to the sick; neglects his parish schools, and preaches every week in a parish of eight thousand to a congregation of one hundred.

This case has been stated to us by a correspondent, who would like to know whether any good comes of the labours of clergymen who mix themselves up magisterially with the quarrels and heart-burnings of their districts? any good, that is to say, at all proportioned to the harm that follows from the loss of their position as good shepherds of the flock, ever more ready to teach than to punish. Our correspondent asks to be informed whether it is worth while to have the Christian guide lost in the worldly judge?

In manufacturing and mining districts, where the number is small, of persons who have wealth and leisure that ensure both local influence and opportunity of taking pains to become qualified for and to be diligent in attendance upon petty and quarter sessions; surely, our friend thinks, it would be better that the judicial function should be entrusted to stipendiary magistrates than to the local clergy; or, as in corporate towns, to the tradesmen who are inextricably involved among the personal concerns and interests of friends, parishioners, and customers. But of all men, the most unfitted, to do service in any sort of judicial court,—except the one that almost every land except Great Britain has—namely, a court of reconciliation for the stoppage of dissension,—is the parish clergyman. The pastor may teach

stubborn men to derive good from the decrees of Rhadamanthus ; but if the pastor himself be the Rhadamanthus, and be more or less lost in that character, can it be said that his parish has the justice that belongs to it by right, or ought to belong to it by right, in a community of reasonable people ?

It sometimes happens that the individual may be, like the janitor of Radamanthus's Court, three gentlemen in one. In not a few instances the squire, the clergyman, and the magistrate is one and the same magnate ; and there is no amount of parochial tyranny and injustice which such a pluralist may not inflict, should he be a harsh or ill-tempered man.

INTELLECTUAL FLEAS.

WE have lately discovered an individual who for the last twenty years has devoted his life to the intellectual training of fleas. He carries on his operations in a little room in Marylebone Street, London : we enter—there are fleas here, fleas there, fleas everywhere : no less than sixty fleas are here imprisoned and sentenced to hard labour for life. All of them are luckily chained, or fastened in some way or other, so that escape and subsequent feasting upon visitors is impossible. A little black speck jumps up suddenly off the table whereon the performance takes place—we walk up to inspect, and find that it is a monster flea attired “à la convict ;” he is free to move about, but, wherever he goes, a long gilt chain, tightly fastened round his neck, accompanies him.

Occasionally he tries to jump ; the chain soon brings him down again, strong as he is. We were told, that if a flea be fastened to the end of an unbroken wheat straw, he will be strong enough to lift it right off the table on which it is placed. This discovery was first made by the flea-proprietor, and made him turn his attention towards utilising the race. One would think it were easy enough to procure troops of fleas, and to train them to perform ; but it appears that neither is an easy matter. It is not easy to procure a lot of able-bodied fleas, and it is not every sort of flea that will do. They must be human fleas : dog fleas, cat fleas, and bird fleas, are of no use—they are not lively enough nor strong enough, and soon break down in their training. Human fleas, therefore, must be obtained, and our friend has created a market for them. The dealers are principally elderly females, who supply the raw material ; the trade price of fleas, moreover (like the trade price of everything else), varies, but the average price is threepence a dozen. In the winter time it is sixpence ; and, on one occasion, the trainer was obliged to give the large sum of sixpence for one single flea. He had arranged to give a performance ; the time arrived ; he unpacked the fleas ; one, whose presence could not be dispensed with,

was gone. What was to be done ? the vacancy must be filled. At last, an ostler, pitying the manager's distress, supplied the needful animal ; but he required sixpence for it, and sixpence he got.

While we were looking at the performance, there came in a fresh supply of fleas ; a swarm of them, in a vial bottle, huddled all together at the bottom. We gave them a shake, and immediately they all began hopping about, hitting their little horny heads against the sides of the bottle (which was held sideways) with such force that there was a distinct noise, as if one had gently tapped the bottle with the nail. They were not very good friends, for they were perpetually getting entangled in masses, and fighting with their tiny but powerful legs, and rolling over and over as if in mortal combat. It was not, however, a case of life and death ; for we did not see one that was looking injured or tired after the mêlée.

We then observed one fact, which gave us great pleasure ; namely, that fleas are at enmity with bugs. There was one bug in the bottle surrounded by many fleas, the poor bug rushed continually from one end of the bottle to the other, running the gauntlet of the assembled fleas ; every flea he came near attacked him, and retreated immediately as though half afraid of him ; the bug, overwhelmed by numbers, had the worst of it, and beat an ignoble retreat into a bit of flannel.

Fleas are not always brought to market in vial bottles. A flea-proprietor told us that he got all his best fleas from Russia, and that they came over in pill-boxes packed in the finest cotton-wool. These fleas were big, powerful, and good workers. We wonder whether the Custom House authorities thought it worth while to examine the contents of these pill-boxes. When our friend in Marylebone makes his annual tour into the provinces, his wife sends him weekly a supply of fleas in the corner of an envelope, packed in tissue-paper. She is careful not to put them in the corner where the stamp goes, as the post-office clerk would, with his stamp-marker, at one blow, smash the whole of the stock.

A flea cannot be taken up from its wild state and made to work at once ; like a colt or a puppy, it must undergo a course of training and discipline. The training is brought about as follows : The flea is taken up gently in a pair of forceps, and a noose of the finest glass-silk is passed round his neck, and there tied with a peculiar knot. The flea, unfortunately for himself, has a groove or depression between his neck, and his body, which serves as a capital hold-fast for the bit of silk ; it can slip neither up nor down, and he cannot push it off with his legs ; he is a prisoner, and is thus tied to his work. This delicate operation is generally performed under a magnifying glass ; but, after a time, the eye gets so accustomed to

the work that the glass is not always used. In no way is the performing flea mutilated; his kangaroo-like springing legs are not cut off, nor are his lobster-like walking legs interfered with,—a flea must be in perfect health to perform well.

The first lesson given to the novice, is the same as that given to a child, namely, to walk. To effect this he is fastened to the end of a slip of card-board, which works on a pin as on a pivot; the moment he feels himself free from the hands, or rather forceps, of the harnesser, he gives a tremendous spring forward: what is the consequence? he advances in a circle, and the weight of the cardboard keeps him down at the same time. He tries it again with the same result; finally, he finds the progress he makes, in no way equal to his exertions; he therefore, like a wise flea, gives it up, and walks round and round with his card-board as quietly as an old blind horse does in a mill. To arrive at this state of training requires about a fortnight; some fleas have more genius than others, but a fortnight is the average time.

There is another mode of training fleas: to shut them up in a small glass box which turns easily between two upright supporters. The flea, when first put in, hops wildly about, but he only hits his head against the top of the box, and at the same time gets giddy with the turning round of his prison. We are not aware which system of training has proved the more successful.

Among the trained fleas already at work, we noticed the following: there was a coach with four fleas harnessed to it, who draw it along a pretty good pace; and we should be inclined to back the coach in a race with a common garden snail. It is very heavy for the little creatures to drag along, for one pane of glass in the coach is equal to the weight of one hundred fleas. There is a large flea, whose daily task is to drag along a little model of a man-of-war; it is amusing to see him push and struggle to get it along; but get it along he does, although it is two hundred and forty times his own weight. Again, there are two fleas secured, one at each end of a very little bit of gold-coloured paper. They are placed in a reversed position to each other—one looking one way, the other another way. Thus tied, they are placed in a sort of arena on the top of a musical box; at one end of the box sits an orchestra composed of fleas, each tied to its seat, and having the resemblance of some musical instrument tied on to the foremost of their legs. The box is made to play, the exhibitor touches each of the musicians with a bit of stick, and they all begin waving their hands about, as performing an elaborate piece of music. The fleas tied to the gold paper feel the jarring of the box below them, and begin

to run round and round as fast as their little legs will carry them. This is called the Flea's Waltz.

Tightly secured in a tiny chair sits a flea facing a tiny cannon. Several times a-day this unfortunate insect fires this cannon, and in this wise:—One of the little slips which form the feather of a quill pen, is fastened on to one of his legs, and a little detonating powder placed on its tip; the exhibitor then presses the wand down on to the cannon, and scratches the detonating powder, it goes off with a sharp report, making the lookers-on jump, but it astonishes nobody more than the flea himself; he flourishes the burnt remains of his firing wand madly about in the air, his numerous legs kick about violently, his little head bobs up and down, and altogether he shows as many symptoms of alarm as it is possible for a flea to exhibit. The individual flea that we saw in this state of trepidation did not seem to have got used to his work, though the poor thing had been firing his cannon about thirty times a-day for a month.

The fleas are not kept always in harness; every night each flea is taken out of his harness, is fed, and placed in a private compartment in a box for the night; before they go to bed they have their supper, and in the morning also their breakfasts, upon the hand of their owner—sometimes he has nearly all his fleas on the backs of his hands at the same moment, all biting and sucking away. For more than twenty years has he thus daily fed his fleas without any detriment to his health: the quantity of blood each flea takes away being imperceptibly small—one drop of blood, he considers, would feed a flea many weeks; but it is the itching sensation caused by the flea cutting the skin which is unpleasant. This feeling of itching he felt painfully when he first began to submit himself to the tender mercies of his little performers: now he is so hardened that he feels them not at all, whether biting or sucking. When, however, there are many on his hands at the same time, he suffers from a sensation of great irritation all over his body, which passes away when their supper is over. He has remarked that fleas will not feed if his hand be not kept perfectly motionless; the act, therefore, of feeding and harnessing is troublesome, and he is obliged to give up two hours in the morning and two in the afternoon to it. His fleas generally live a long time, provided they are properly fed and taken care of. He once had a flea, a patriarch, who for eighteen months was occupied in pulling up a little bucket from a well: this flea lived longer than any other flea he ever had, and he believes he died finally from pure old age; for he was found dead one day, faithful to his post, with his bucket drawn half-way up the well.

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MILVERSTON WORTHIES.

THE Cleverboots family was ever remarkable for its spirit of research. Guy de Cleverbotes, secretary to the good Duke Robert of Normandy, father of William the Conqueror, was the most renowned antiquary and genealogist of his time; his celebrated dissertation on the use of Thumbe Ryniges is still a valued authority amongst learned men. Longspée de Cleverbotes, whose cross-legged effigy is to be admired in Framlingham Church, in a fine state of mutilation, has left the best work on Ye Druids Temples that we possess, and also a brief chronicle of the Holie Warres which is little known except to historians. Wilfred de Cleverbotes, who wrote in the early days of the Reformation, has preserved the traditions of church-decoration, priestly garments and festival ceremonies. His treatise is in Latin and in folio, and is deservedly esteemed a colossal monument of antiquarian knowledge. It is referred to in all disputed matters of ecclesiastical millinery as a standard authority. The reign of Queen Elizabeth, also, boasts its Sir Philip de Cleverbotes, whose famous translation from the Saxon of the Romance of Eldegynde has never been surpassed for accuracy, grace, and elegance; it preserves all the spirit of the original and, what is more remarkable, its peculiar rhythm as well.

As a rule, we have been less remarkable for the success than for the ingenuity of our labours: we have ever preferred to be guided by the erratic promptings of genius, rather than to follow the common herd through beaten and useful tracks. This is my own father's case: after exhausting the whole of his patrimony and half his life-time on the invention of a machine for weaving worsted stockings, he found that a better stocking-weaving-machine had been constructed fifty years before, and that it had been improved to perfection while he was working out its first principles. My uncles Cyril and Theodore—both men of original and persevering talents,—devoted themselves to science; but, unhappily, their contrivances had been invented and abandoned as useless, long before they were short-coated, and all their discoveries had been doubted, and discussed, abandoned or adopted at various antecedent dates.

Let them, however, have the honour of their pure, their noble intentions.

The women of our family have also testified a lofty superiority of character in many ways. Aunt Abby constructed a swing for the safe recreation of infants of tender years, that the perpetual assiduities of the nurse might be intermitted, and that they may allow her to work at more useful matters. My mother, a most simple-minded, tender-hearted creature, devoted to her children, disapproved of the swing emphatically; although my father asserted that it was extraordinarily ingenious, and ought to be patented. Its efficiency was first tried on me, then an innocent unweaned babe, and the effects of this trial remain with me to the present hour. I fell upon my face; and though, of course, my nose was in an undeveloped stage, its line of beauty was for ever marred. Aunt Abby spent many years in striving to remedy the radical defects of her invention; and, just when her efforts were on the point of being crowned with success, somebody else constructed the baby-jumper.

My two brothers inherit the family talents in an eminent degree; and, if suitable openings for their exercise could be found, they would, doubtless, become as distinguished in their day and generation as any of our memorable ancestors. I, also, the only daughter of our branch, am of an inquiring mind; and, if my opportunities equalled my powers, it is the opinion of our friends that I should do something remarkable.

MILVERSTON is an old town, not particularly picturesque, not manufacturing, and not ecclesiastical; simply retired, cheap, and very healthy. You may find hundreds of such provincial towns in England, each with its weekly markets, annual fairs, yeomanry ball, archery meeting, three churches, Dissenting and Romanist chapels, hordes of small gentry, and half-pay officers' families. Milverston has besides a neat, small theatre and a handsome subscription-library; which I take to be rather the exception than the rule in country towns.

Society in Milverston is very exclusive. The shop-keepers are a race apart; a race by many systematically repressed, lest, in these progress times, they should attempt to encroach. Our rector is one of the old school: retired,

excellent, kind, learned, charitable, indolent. When I speak of the rector, of course I mean Dr. Wyatt, not the gentlemen at either of the new churches, or Mr. Dove, incumbent of the Chapel of Ease, in Lad Lane. Our rector held the living of St. Mary's, before I was born, and it is one of his favourite stories to tell how he baptised me by a wrong name, and how cross my dear mother was with him for making the mistake; and how he soothed her by saying that my namesake, Lydia, the seller of purple, was a good woman, and I should be trained to imitate her. As if the Cleverboots were not always original! I remember how he used mildly to reprove the censorious of our community by saying with a grave, benign, impressive air, "My dear people, you should not speak evil even of the town-pump."

Religious differences are marked and inveterate at Milverston. Dissenters of every denomination are considered low; being almost exclusively confined to the trading classes—the solitary exception of our own acquaintance is Dr. Taylor and his family who are members of the Scotch Kirk. Then there are the three church parties: the High, the High-and-dry, and the Low or Evangelical. Dr. Wyatt leads the second and by far the most numerous party: the Reverend Basil St. John represents the High Church interest, and Mr. Dove is the Evangelical Apostle. The most recently erected church—St. James's—is in the suburbs, and its vicar, young Mr. Collins, has not yet committed himself to any extreme principles, and is a favourite with the rector's friends. Mr. Basil St. John is of a meagre habit, which he renders still more striking by clothing himself in tight, buttoned-up, long-skirted coats, and keeping his eyelids down when he walks in the street. He is said to hold a theory that priests ought not to marry, and is invested thereby with a sentimental interest in the eyes of his female parishioners, who, are for ever conspiring to present him with some piece of ecclesiastical millinery for the embellishment of his church. The admirers of Mr. Dove are numerous, and to them has been ironically affixed the initials T. P. (or Truly Pious). They eschew all public amusements; are never seen at a ball, an archery-meeting or any other of our so-called vestibules to perdition; are much given to lecturing in and out of season, to tea-drinking, to denunciation of other sects, and to other quiet excitements of a domestic character. The rector's friends are less strict; they patronise the little theatre for the good of the town; keep up the balls patriotically; dine, dance, and play a quiet rubber at each other's houses. Dr. Wyatt could not get through his life without his rubber; he has it as regularly as his dinner, and avers that it promotes digestion.

Hidden far down a narrow street, in the oldest part of the town, is the Roman Catholic Chapel. Mr. Garnet, the priest, is suspected

by timid old ladies of being a Jesuit in disguise. I only see in him a man with whom fasting has agreed remarkably well; who is diligent amongst his people, and gives cause of offence to nobody. He resides in a very ancient house with an enclosed garden, which is the dwelling of three maiden-sisters—Percy by name—who, to judge from their appearance, must be in narrow circumstances. They do not go into society at all, but the two elder sisters may be seen occasionally on market-days; the third never goes out. I have observed them often in oddly-shaped Leghorn bonnets and purple pelisses, made many years ago, bargaining for eggs just below our dining-room window. Their faces are pinched and colourless, their eyes and hair dim; but nobody ever indulges in a flippant remark on their appearance. It is enough for Milverston that they are ladies of long descent, and that the ancient gable-house they inhabit bears, upon a shield over the doorway, the half-effaced arms of the noble Percy family, and the date fifteen hundred and seventy-six. The oldest person in the town cannot remember when any but a Percy lived in that house. St. Mary's Church is full of their monuments, and the magnificent stained east window of which Milverston is so proud, was put up three centuries ago in remembrance of one of them who fell at Zutphen with the knight of gentle memory, Sir Philip Sidney.

Our doctors and lawyers are so numerous that it has ever been cause of wonder to me, how they all contrive to exist upon so small a community, which is remarkably peaceful and healthy. But that they live, and live comfortably, nay luxuriously, is a fact sufficiently attested by their wives and daughters wearing best bonnets every day. I do not patronise either profession, for Uncle Cyril has made me a convert to homeopathy; and, with one of these pretty little twelve-and-six-penny cases of globules and a manual, price one shilling, I doctor myself and all our family. As for law, I would rather give away everything I possess, than venture into such a complicated trap. If anybody does go to law in Milverston, it is surreptitiously, as if they were ashamed of themselves: the fact is whispered in corners with much pursuing up of mouths and cautious condemnation.

Milverston does not lack its perambulating gazette. This news-organ is Miss Judith Prior, a maiden lady, many years past the seventh age of woman—she may be fifty-six; perhaps sixty; it is impossible to guess with exactness, for she devotes a good deal of her superfluous energy to suppressing and embellishing the fact. She is a great authority amongst the clergy, and holds despotic power over all the charity-school children. In church she stands up before all the congregation, with a coppery complexion which has won her the epithet of the Indian Chief, chanting the psalms defiantly. It is impossible

to describe the air with which she gives that verse "I will not fear what man can do unto me!" as if she were a whole body of women's rights women rolled into one, and defying the sex. She needs this confidence; for, were she not protected by her poke bonnet, she would have been called out dozens of times. It must be acknowledged, however, that, lacking Miss Prior's tongue, there would be a dearth of conversation at our small, select tea-parties. She generally contrives to have two families at variance, and the repetition of the ill-natured things the one says to the other imparts great vivacity to her conversation. We always talk before her in the pleasing uncertainty of a chance word and her repetition thereof, blowing up a mine between ourselves and our best friends. This being done, Miss Prior redoubles her assiduities to both parties, travels backwards and forwards diligently widening the breach, and adding daily to her repertoire of spiteful anecdotes. Dear, pretty, sensible, little Mrs. Dove, is the only person in the community who dares openly to brave Miss Prior. She quotes to her all the appropriate texts, and winds up emphatically with Dr. Wyatt's advice, "You should not speak evil, even of the town-pump." Many quarrels have been adjusted in the Dove drawing-room, greatly to Miss Prior's discomfiture; and it is thought by sanguine people, that if proper measures are taken she may soon be put a stop to altogether. I wish she were.

The favourite lounge in Milverston is Miss Wolsey's shop. She has confectionery and luncheon buns of the freshest and daintiest; and, in the two rooms above, a circulating library of select works, chiefly novels, not quite so fresh as her pastry. I have borrowed there, at the rate of a penny per volume, the History of Sir Charles Grandison, Clarissa, Pamela, and a few other standard works. Also at Miss Wolsey's may be purchased materials for fancy-work: and having once proposed to set up a ladies' news-room and failed in the attempt, she still receives a few subscriptions which enable her to have the St. James's Daily Chronicle always lying on her counter for inspection. She also has a register for governesses and superior servants; but her chief source of income is buns.

Our two chief milliners, Mrs. Brisket and Mrs. Dent, live on the same side of the market-place, a few doors only from each other. The gayer section of the church parties patronise Mrs. Briskett; the T. P. clique uphold Mrs. Dent. Both ladies understand the science of flattery, and apply it with the tact which a long and intimate acquaintance with the feminine idiosyncrasy in its most confidential moments, can alone have taught them.

Our house is on the north side of the market-place, nearly opposite St. Mary's church, and the bay-window of the sitting-

room up-stairs has brought me acquainted with the outward aspect of a great many of the Milverston folks, of whose names and occupations I am altogether ignorant. First, there are the walking girls: four of them, all clad alike in grey lama dresses, black capes, and straw bonnets trimmed with rose-colour; they are all rather pretty, all of a size, and all very merry. At every hour of the day they are to be seen fitting in one direction or another, chattering and laughing aloud; pausing occasionally to look round at anything that has attracted their attention, and then darting off again, as if they had to be at a given point at a certain moment. At first, I thought they were oddities walking for a wager and bound to traverse so many miles of paving-stones in so many hours; but the irregularity of their transits forbids this supposition. On market-days and days of public amusement they are ubiquitous; I am sure they are not canny, they are in so many places at once. I wish they would get married.

Who is Effect? I myself was young five-and-twenty years ago, and so far back as that I can recollect Effect with exactly the same mediæval aspect as she wears at this blessed day. She is not rich, for her garments are splendid with the mellow tints of antiquity; but she makes the best of them. She is of moyen height, and walks with a swaying gait, suggestive of ducks, while she holds up her dress in front to display an embroidered petticoat and a pair of very neat boots. Her countenance is serio-comic; serio as regards herself, comic as regards the spectator. She wears a front of dishevelled brown curls parted very much on one side, a ruby velvet bonnet through every season, and, over all, an awful, nodding plume. In her disengaged hand she invariably carries an elegantly bound volume, consisting probably of Lyrics of the Heart and other poetical effusions; she does not frequent the streets so much as the suburban walks; where I often meet her, murmuring poetry to herself and looking very melancholy. Poor old Effect!

When the moustache movement began, Milverston opposed it on principle, as opening a door to revolutionary sentiments and generally subversive of that respectability which is the fundamental characteristic of all English institutions. We talked seriously and emphatically about it, and the married ladies were one and all denunciatory—none of their husbands should make guys of themselves, that should they not. Mr. Matthew Wilson, a gentleman generally supposed to be under mild but effective government, went up to town at this critical juncture and returned with—with all his face eclipsed in three weeks' growth of variegated hair. It was not handsome. People asked satirically if he had gone over to the Latter-Day Saints—it being well known that he was not a saint of any denomination—and one fierce lady who dreaded the contagion of example,

offered Mrs. Wilson a pair of scissors to crop the obnoxious tangle while her spouse slept. But the little wife said, with tears in her eyes, that it would be as much as her ringlets were worth to touch it, and it grew and grew until it aggravated many others to try what they could do in the same line, for the way in which the little man vaunted himself of his beard was quite insufferable. He thought himself wiser with it; talked about patriarchs and other obsolete topics, and elevated his chin in the air until it was a sore temptation to all beholders to pluck him by the beard. After a period of various degrees of stubbliness, light gentlemen of Milverston came forth decked with more or less hair; some with only moustache and imperial, others all over except the nose and forehead—it was pure contradiction in them and emulation—which of them ever thought of coveting the locks on his friend's head? but many, many longed for the hair off Mr. Matthew Wilson's chin. It became quite a mania. The shop-boys all began to cultivate their faces, and Miss Wolsey got some stuff with a long name which was warranted to give the moustache a superlatively elegant curl. She told me it sold admirably; Mrs. Matthew Wilson withdrew her custom from the bun-shop on that very account; Miss Wolsey was false to her sex. By degrees the mania decreased; first one countenance lost its superfluous adornment, then another, and finally at a general réunion in Mrs. Briskett's show-room, the first offender's wife exhibited his moustache triumphantly; she had gummed and twirled it into a true-love knot, and put it in a locket appended to her watch-chain. After that incident there were no more non-professional beards.

Milverston owns two Latter-day Saints of the real kind; the one a gigantic blacksmith, the other a small man with the aspect of a Skye terrier crossed in its affections. The former always looms large at the doorway of his forge, which is in a wide thoroughfare, waiting for equine customers; whilst his myrmidons in the background are blowing the furnace, welding bits of metal, and performing other labours of the craft. His beard is dingy grey and yellow, and is scattered over his broad chest, while his hair is plaited behind in several little tails, and then clubbed up into a single twist. The other man is a basket-maker, and every market-day he sits just before our house, with his wares for sale; his nature, from what I have observed, is as kindly as his countenance is cross-grained.

Amongst others whose peculiarities have caught my attention is the Quixotic gentleman who almost lives at the subscription library, with his hat at the back of his head, and his eyes always looking vaguely about for adventures; also the Falstaffian auctioneer, who eclipses completely the light of a bay window in passing and the multitude of young

clerks (most of them of singularly short stature), emulous of such fame as wonderfully lacquered boots, ingenious ties, and immaculate all-round collars can afford them.

And then the mendicants, who may be likened to fragments of battered old wall, such as we see sometimes shouldering respectable bricks and mortar—the Irishman—that animate bundle of rags, that scarecrow, that compound of dirt, roguery, and wit, who evades the policeman, and sings ballads in a cracked voice, interspersed with dancing: the man with laces who infests the bridge and hangs his hands like a begging poodle; the sturdy fellow on one crutch who demands alms with a your-money-or-your-life air: crazy Betty, who bows graciously to all young people, and collects fragments of stick and coal; the cripple girl with beautiful blue eyes, and the old match-woman, who whines so cleverly, and smells so odiously of gin. Besides these there is that eternal woman with the babies, or who is just going to have babies, and has nothing to dress them in when they come, and the people without arms or legs, or with odd ones, who crawl about on market-day, and harrow up everybody's feeling, nine times out of ten unnecessarily. These are as much features of Milverston streets as the church steeple or the inn doorways.

Some persons have foolishly regretted that I do not inherit my mother's prettiness rather than my father's high, aristocratic, Roman features; but it is needless to say that such weakness is unshared by me. I am proud that I bear the stamp of my descent upon my face, and would not exchange it for the charms of the Three Graces combined. For what is beauty to expression? What indeed? Beauty is but a passing monthly rose; expression is a crisp everlasting! Beauty fades at the touch of time; expression gains in intensity by every added year! Beauty gratifies the eye, but expression delights the heart, engages the understanding, and abides within the memory so long as it holds its sway.

My life is what might be expected from a Cleverboots—a not unworthy Cleverboots. My tastes are literary, my manners firm but unobtrusive, my principles of the strongest character. From my youth up I have been an observer—may I, without trenching on the domains of the more lordly sex, say, a critical observer of human nature. I have shot folly as she flew by, and transfixed frivolity with a glance, throwing, from time to time, a few remarks on paper to that effect, with a view to holding the mirror up to art and nature both. From grave to gay, I have passed with the airy versatility of a true Cleverboots; and if my portraits be not always flattering, lay not the fault to me, but to the figures that flit before my magic glass, which but reflects them faithfully, and never condescends to exaggerate or distort.

I do not pledge myself to any particular line of observation in the selection I shall make from my accumulated and ever accumulating papers, but I modestly hope to offer something which shall gratify every taste.

THE RHODODENDRON GARDEN.

THE inhabitants of London were indulged, during the past month of June, with one of the daintiest sights ever numbered among the pleasures of a capital. It was an *At Home* to morning callers on the part of certain members of the great Heath family, chiefly the Rhododendrons and Azaleas. The members of this widely-scattered family; who, having taken up their temporary lodging at Ashburnham Park, appeared in a spacious reception-room abutting on Cremorne Gardens, Chelsea, and looked their best to charm all visitors. They were all born at Knaphill, in the neighbourhood of Woking, where they have nearly a hundred acres of their own, and are waited upon by a large retinue of attendants, under the command of their two faithful servants, Messrs. Waterer and Godfrey. All these distinguished branches of a noble family entertained the Queen Victoria and all her court; and there was no court lady better dressed than they were on that great occasion.

The roots of all plants of the Heath family run out into fibrils of a hair-like fineness; that is the reason why the soil applied to them must be of a light sort, and moist enough. They like best rotted peat, or leaf-mould, or loamy sand. To a net-work of light filaments this kind of soil clings well—so well, that although exposure to the air soon injures them, there is not much reason to dread exposure if the plant be dug up with its roots still in the ball of earth that surrounds them. They can be so dug up and conveyed from place to place without the use of pots; and for this reason it has been possible for Messrs. Waterer and Godfrey to do what they have been lately doing (and will do again, no doubt, in future years) in Ashburnham Park, King's Road, Chelsea, with the assistance of Mr. Simpson, who is the active and sensible proprietor of that property.

Under a huge tent they made a garden: not of flower-stands, but an actual garden, and no small one, with gravel walks, and beds planned by the skill of practised gardeners. Into the garden they then brought by thousands, from their nursery-grounds at Knaphill, choice rhododendrons, azaleas, kalmias, and other allied plants; all chosen from those that were on the point of bursting into fullest blossom; but with the buds yet solid enough to bear the jolts of travel. The trees were then carefully assorted as to size and colour, and transplanted into the beds prepared for them. A few days having then been suffered to elapse, the blos-

soms opened, and the whole garden became an expanse of flower in which not a break was to be seen. Cushioned seats were placed here and there under the blossoming trees; an elegant little stage erected at one end, from which visitors might look abroad on the whole fairy spectacle; and then the doors were opened. The tie of kindred among the plants by confining all varieties of form and tint within certain strict limits, ensured a complete absence of harsh contrasts. The charm was everywhere perfect, and its delicacy became more apparent as, with little impairment of the general effect, the tender blossom leaves began, as their last days drew near, to wrinkle and to fall. Before the beauty of the whole display had vanished, the doors of the garden closed. The plants are now being dug up again (we assume that the garden will be shut ere this reaches the reader), and carried back to Knaphill with the soil about their roots.

The great mass of colour in this garden of flowers, having settled like a flight of birds upon a patch of London ground takes flight again as quickly; and, as the great mass of colour was produced by the rhododendrons, we shall speak of them as types of the whole show. Much time and knowledge, many successive discoveries—some of them very recent—have gone to that extension of the range of colour in the rhododendrons which made it possible for the massing of their blossoms to produce effects so exquisite. The common purple or Pontic Rhododendron itself is an old friend in Europe. It abounds in the Levant, and was named as we now name it by the ancient Greeks, the word meaning rose-tree. It was called also rhododaphne, rose-laurel, though that name more strictly belonged to the oleander; but of old, and till within the last two hundred years, rhododendrons and oleanders were not carefully distinguished from each other. The Pontic Rhododendron is, of course, to be found growing wild in the land once called Pontus, and now called Armenia. Although fair to the eye,—second only to the roses—the rhododendrons and azaleas are poisonous plants, and the abundance of their flowers was believed to have so great an influence over the honey of the country, that the Romans would not receive honey in tribute from the men of Pontus; but took from them instead of it a double quantity of wax. It was to the Pontic honey, gathered chiefly by the bees from rhododendrons and azaleas, that the dreadful sufferings of the Greeks near Trebizond described by Xenophon in his account of the Retreat of the Ten Thousand, were ascribed. They vomited, and became delirious. The ground was covered with the bodies of the soldiers as it is after a battle; but, in twenty-four hours, except that they were weakened, all were well again. The rhododendron, says an old herbalist, is “in all poyntes like a Pharesy; that is, beauteous without, and

within a rauenus wolf and murderer." Dr. Hooker wrote also from the passes of Thibet: "Here are three rhododendrons, two of them resinous and strongly odoriferous; and it is to the presence of these plants that the natives attribute the painful sensations experienced at great elevations."

And now that we have named Dr. Hooker, we have named the chief adorning of the rhododendron garden. Before his recent exploration of the rhododendrons of the Sikkim Himalaya, and his introduction of new seeds, the range of colour over which the gardener had rule was very limited. There are three plants out of which to breed varieties. Probably the reader knows how, within the flower-cup the filaments (each bearing a case full of yellow dust, or pollen) surround the little central column. On the point of that column they scatter their dust when the flower is full-blown, and the dust, as a fertilising powder, passes in a changed form down the column to the seed-case at its root, where it gives life to the seeds. If the filaments of a flower—say of a flower of the purple rhododendron—be cut off, and at the time when they should shed their pollen on the summit of the little column, called the pistil, there be shed on it by a gardener the ripe dust or pollen of another sort of rhododendron—say of the Caucasian—the resulting seeds will produce hybrid plants partaking of the qualities of either parent. Let all these seeds be sown, and, perhaps, no two will come up alike. Some will produce plants more nearly like the male parent, some plants more nearly like the female parent, and the blossoms may be of all shades of colour between white and purple. On this principle and within limits so defined, many varieties of rhododendron were produced at Knaphill and elsewhere; the colours of their flowers being formed almost exclusively by modification of the main elements of purple, pink, and white. In the gardener's eyes the great merit of Dr. Hooker's Asiatic explorations was, that he brought home seeds of new rhododendrons; among which were some that yielded blossoms of the richest scarlet.

Rhododendrons are a hardy race of plants. There is strong evidence of this in the mere fact that they can be dug up by thousands while in bud, brought to a distance to display their blossoming, and then dug up again and carried home: but there is a limit to their hardihood. English Aprils will take care that no good rhododendron blossoms shall show their petals out of doors; nor is it an easy, if a possible, thing so to acclimatise a plant as to make it change its own appointed times of bud, and flower, and fruit. The difficulty is to be overcome only by intermarriages of the Americans and Europeans with the Asiatics. On this principle gardeners have acted. On this principle the tints were produced, by the variety of which we have

been charmed during this month of June, now past, in the Rhododendron Garden which suggested these remarks. The Himalayan varieties having been introduced by seed only within the last ten years, it is only now, therefore, that we are beginning to see the extent and beauty of the addition to be made to English gardens by the cultivation of plants bred from them. The show at Ashburnham Park, in fact, was one of the first hints, and the most emphatic we have yet had, of the debt England will owe for increase of beauty in its gardens to the naturalist who first explored the rhododendrons of the Sikkim Himalaya.

ERIC WALDERTHORN.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

ERNST WALDERTHORN walked to and fro in the withdrawing-room of Kronenthal. His face was anxious, though he strove to smile and words of hope were on his lips, which, to judge from his unequal steps and restless eyes, seemed far from his heart.

"You may depend on it, dear mother, that Eric never left Stettin that stormy night. Every one must have seen the storm coming up all the evening. You may rest assured he slept safely under the hospitable roof of the Goldenstern."

"Heaven grant it may be as you say, my son," answered the lady to whom his words were addressed.

The lady of Kronenthal, as she was always called, had not long passed the prime of life. She was about forty-five, and bore her years well, though the traces of deep sorrow were to be seen on her still handsome countenance. The likeness between her and her children was very remarkable, and there could be no doubt as to whence Eric derived his broad forehead and deep intellectual eye. She was tall and rather slight; and, as she rose from her chair and, approaching her eldest son, stood beside him putting her hand upon his arm and looking into his face, he almost started back from her, and from his own thoughts,—the face was so like Eric's.

"Mother! I will have a horse saddled and ride over to Stettin. There is plenty of time before dark."

But before this intention could be executed, sleigh bells were heard in the court below; and Ernst, running down, was seized in the hall by Eric. Warm greetings passed between the brothers: all the warmer for the suspense Ernst had been enduring.

Eric presented Carl, who was heartily welcomed, and the three proceeded upstairs to the mother—overpowered with the joy of hearing her son's voice—who stood trembling at the door. Eric bounded forward and, embracing her, carried her to the sofa, covering her face and hands with kisses.

"Mother, dear mother, I hope you have

not been very anxious about me. The storm detained us ; we slept at Stettin that night, and had to wait there till the road was passable."

But the mother did not so soon recover from the suspense she had been enduring for the last two days ; and now the reaction was so great that she fairly gave way and burst into tears, as Eric knelt before her. So he looked at Carl, and they said nothing about the wolves and the snow-storm.

"Mother," said Eric, "I have brought you something from Rome, which I know will please you. It is to be hung in your oratory. It will come with the rest of my things in the baggage-sleigh this evening. And see, Ernst," he continued, "what I have brought for you, or rather for your bride."

"How beautiful!" said Ernst, as he opened a case, which his brother put into his hands, and an exquisite set of antique cameos met his eyes.

"I hope your bride will like them," he said, "and I hope she will approve of her new brother a little ; though, I suppose, she likes you so much that she will have no liking to bestow on me."

"Oh, yes, a sister's love, dear Eric ; we never had a sister. Some day you will give me one, as I give you one, now."

Eric reddened, and said, "Perhaps."

"There could not have been a nobler pair of brothers," thought Carl, as sitting beside the lady of Kronenthal, he watched them as they walked arm-in-arm, and up and down the room. There was a great likeness between the two. Eric was a little taller, though both were tall and well made. There was the same frank bearing, the same noble cast of countenance ; but there was a look of fire at times in Eric's eyes, which the calm grey eyes of Ernst did not possess. There was in both the same confiding, loving repose on each other's faith. The love that Eric bore his brother, amounted almost to devotion ; and that of Ernst for him was that of one who had protected, and humoured, and petted him from his infancy.

Left without a father when they were yet infants, the three boys soon knew what the cares and sorrows of the world meant. Their right to their inheritance was contested for years, and more than once the mother had been obliged to fly by night to carry her children to a place of safety, and often had she known what it was even to want bread and a place of refuge. During all these trials—which came to a close when Ernst was twelve and Eric ten—the care of the elder brother for the younger was something beautiful to witness ; and after they were restored to their estate in peace and safety, his care and solicitude for him seemed to increase. It was Ernst who had taught him all the athletic exercises in which he was so well skilled ; Ernst who had carried him home half-dead through a snow-storm ; Ernst who

had killed the wolf whose teeth were at his throat ; and, when the indescribable longing had seized him to be an artist—to see Rome—it was Ernst's entreaties which had obtained the mother's reluctant consent to his departure. It was not surprising, that he loved Ernst with all the strength of his impassioned soul ; that to him all his thoughts turned in success, in despair ; that to him he poured out his heart in long letters—all his yearnings, his hopes, his fears ; that to Ernst were sent the first successful creations of his pencil, of his chisel ; and that at Ernst's summons he should have left his beloved studio, his unfinished picture, and journeyed to the north, to be present at the crowning of his brother's happiness, which he knew would have been incomplete without him.

This Carl knew partly. Eric from time to time had told him enough of his past life to make him understand the bond which bound the brothers together, and made their affection appear so beautiful to him. It was as much to see this Ernst, of whom Eric spoke so constantly, that Carl had consented to go with him to Kronenthal, as the desire to hunt wolves, to skat, or enjoy the other amusements of a Pomeranian winter.

"When shall I see your bride?" said Eric. "And you will not tell me her name?"

"No," replied Ernst, "I want to surprise you. She is an old friend of yours."

"Who can she be?" said Eric.

"You will see to-night," replied Ernst. "We are going to Rabenstein to spend a few days. She will be there. You must drive our mother, Eric ; and your English friend and I will take the other sleigh."

While Carl was in his room preparing for this visit, Eric came in to him.

"Carl, don't say anything about the wolves or the snow-storm to Ernst as you go to Rabenstein ; it will make him uneasy, and my mother will be sure to find it out if it is spoken of. I would not have her know it just now for a great deal ; her nerves are still trembling." After a pause, he continued, "I must ask Ernst if he knows the Mellinthsens. I can't remember the name."

"She is a beautiful creature," said Carl, as he continued his occupation of culling the contents of a large portmanteau and transferring them to a smaller one.

"Carl, Carl, she is mine. I have won her!" said Eric. "At least, I know she loves me. For the rest I do not foresee any difficulty. My mother and Ernst are so universally beloved and respected in the neighbourhood, that I do not think I shall ask her parents for her in vain."

"I wish you joy, dear Eric," said Carl, warmly pressing his hand. "You will find that there is a great difference between pure love and the devouring fire of passion."

"It was the last I feared," said Eric. "I

know too well what I suffered all last summer — what it cost me of my life and power as an artist, and how much time I lost in fruitless longings. But it is a quiet joy which fills my heart since I became certain that Marie loves me. I shall tell Ernst all about it when we return from Rabenstein. Carl, were you going to Rabenstein, when I met you at Stettin ?

"Yes," I was going to see Franz Von Wedel. He lives there, does he not ?"

"Lives there !" said Eric ; "yes, and is a great friend of ours. It is he whom we are going to visit. Rabenstein castle belongs to his father. It is close to the town. You must take care of your heart, Carl ; Franz has some very beautiful sisters, I hear. I knew them when they were little girls, and I was a boy of fourteen. I hear they have grown to be perfect beauties. When I was here two winters ago, they were in Paris with their aunt ; so I did not see them."

On their arrival at Rabenstein, the travellers were shown into the rooms prepared for them. Carl had one allotted to him close to those of the two brothers ; and Eric had been gossiping with him, and had not quite finished his toilet, when Ernst came into his room. His face was radiant with some great joy. He stretched out his hand to his brother Eric, and took hold of his, which he pressed warmly.

"How well you look, Eric, this evening !" he said. "You are as handsome as a young bridegroom going to see his betrothed. Or shall we make this your betrothal night ? There are such beautiful young ladies downstairs, you must choose one. But come ; I want to present you to my bride ; she is all impatience to see you."

As the three young men descended the wide staircase of the old castle, and just as they had reached the last step, Ernst said to his brother, "Eric, why did you not tell me all about your adventure with the wolves the other night, and your ride in the snow-storm ?"

Eric started. He looked at his brother.

"Who told you ? Did Carl ?"

"Not I," said Carl.

"Ernst ! how came you to know anything about it ?"

"Come and see who told me," said Ernst, smiling, and he laid his hand on the door.

Eric's heart beat quickly, his eyes became dizzy. Who told Ernst about the wolves ? His bride ? How came she to know ? Who told her ? Had Marie ? Did she know Marie ? Was Marie there ? No ; she was at Strahlen, thirty leagues off. Then he remembered her sister's parting words, "You will see us sooner than you expect." A light flashed through his mind. It was she—his brother's bride—whom he had rescued from death ! She was on her way to Rabenstein when he had met her. She, Marie, whom

he loved with all the strength of his soul ! He looked around ; he would have fled. Quick as lightning this truth must have flashed through his mind ; for, almost before Ernst had done speaking, the door was opened, and there, in a brilliantly-lighted room, stood his mother ; and, beside her, robed in pure white, the golden curls falling round her beautiful face, stood Marie. Marie, his Roman dream. Marie, his beloved. Marie, his brother's bride !

There were other persons in the room. He saw only her. Mechanically, as in a dream, he followed his brother : as in a dream, he heard the voices of those around him ; a confused whirring filled his ears. He saw Marie advance towards him, again holding out both her hands, smiling with an angelic smile. He looked at her. All present saw his face was of a deadly pallor ; then a wild, unearthly gleam shot from his eyes. He advanced to meet Marie as she approached ; then turned and fled.

All stood amazed. In the first consternation none thought of following him ; and when Ernst and Carl did so, it was too late. He was nowhere to be found. He was gone ; fled out into the night.

Soon the woods round Rabenstein rang with the voices of men and hounds. "Eric ! Eric !" was heard on every side in the voices of his friend and brother. Ernst and Carl sought everywhere ; and Schwartz bounded into the woods, baying loudly. "Heaven be praised !" said Ernst ; "he is on his track." But hour after hour passed, and neither Schwartz nor Eric re-appeared.

"Can I have a sleigh ?" asked Carl. "I will go to Stettin. I think he will go there."

"I will go with you," said Ernst.

"I think it will be better that you should stay here and direct the search, both here and at Kronenthal," answered Carl. "We had better divide our exertions. Depend upon me for leaving, on my part, nothing undone. I will write to you from Stettin, and tell you where I go next, if my researches there are unsuccessful ; and you can write to me there, and let me know whether you find any traces of him."

So Carl arrived at Stettin, and went to the Goldenstern, which he had only left a few hours before.

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

ERIC had rushed from the room into the hall ; caught up his cloak and cap, which still lay there, opened the outer door, and fled—fled out into the brilliant night ; fled over the hard frozen snow ; fled, whither he knew not. One idea, one thought, scorched his brain, lent wings to his feet. Ernst's bride ! —his brother's bride ! At first he could think of nothing else. Then the remembrance of the two days passed at Stettin came back in a flood to his memory. Looks, tones, words, seared him as with a hot iron.

Yes, his brother's bride ; he loved her, loved her to madness. He felt—now when he knew she was lost to him for ever—the full force of the burning passion with which he loved her. Why should his brother stand between him and Marie ? Had he rescued her from death ? Had he borne her through the storm ? And Marie herself. Why had she deceived him : why had she given him a false name ? And when he had spoken of Ernst, why had she not told him all ? Even the ring of betrothal, he had never seen ; had she even laid that aside to deceive him ? If she had but told him all, when she found out who he was, he would have conquered his feelings whilst they were yet undeveloped ; at any rate, they would not have reached their present height ; and, had he found that he could not contemplate his brother's union with her with composure, at least he would have returned to Rome—could have made some excuse. But now everyone had been a witness to his madness, and his crime was known to all. On he fled ! Day broke, and night came, and day broke again, and still he fled—onward, onward.

At last, exhausted nature could bear no more ; and one day he awoke, weak and trembling, like a child, and found himself in a small but poorly-furnished room—the best bed-room of the small inn of a little town, scarcely better than a village. He was told that he had been picked up on the road, apparently dead, and had been brought in. He had been there ten days ; he had been delirious, and had had frightful dreams. He tried to rise up in the bed on which he lay ; but he fell back on the pillow. Recollection returned to him. Was it a continuation of the horrid nightmare of his delirium, or was it a reality ? The whole truth soon re-entered his mind ; but he no longer raved when he remembered all ; he was too weak. He would write to Ernst ; he would tell him how involuntary his fault was, and how deeply he repented it.

And Marie, she who had been a pure and holy ideal to him so long—a form to place in heavenly visions—she, a worthless vain heartless woman, who cared not who suffered ruin, if she could only win admiration. Ah ! why did he not leave her to the wolves that night ? Better that Ernst should have wept for his bride, than to have been betrayed by her. Why had he not perished in the storm ? Better that Ernst should have wept for him, than have been betrayed by his brother, who owed him everything. Then the thought flashed across his mind, might she not be innocent ? Yes, she was innocent, pure as an angel. She knew he was Ernst's brother ; it was as sister that she had answered his looks of love ; as a sister she had allowed his lips to rest on her forehead, her head to lean upon his heart. And then, had he not saved her from a cruel death ? Gratitude alone would impel her to

show affection to him, greater even than could have been granted to the brother of her betrothed. Oh, he alone was the criminal ; and he alone would bear the punishment. Let Ernst and Marie be happy.

And so he wandered on—no longer flying but listless, despairing—he scarcely knew where. He had some faint recollection of selling a ring of some value, which he found on his hand ; and then of modelling a dog—a wolf-hound—and selling that for very little money for his wants were few.

At length, one day, he found himself in Rome, walking up the street where he had lodgings, in what had once been a palace. Entering the door, a pretty young woman dropped him a curtsy, and led the way up a broad staircase. She unlocked a door ; he entered. It was his room. There was the unfinished picture which he had left, to obey Ernst's summons to Kronenthal, where his presence had turned that happiness into sorrow.

He sank upon a chair and hid his face in his hands. "Is the signor tired ?" asked the pretty young woman in her soft language. "Can I bring him some wine ? Will he not take something ?"

Eric looked up. He made sign to her that he wanted nothing. "Is this the signor's beautiful dog ?" she inquired, pointing to a large wolf-hound that lay beside his chair, panting. "Poor hound, he is tired ; he seems quite footsore. I will fetch him some water." And the young woman went out.

Eric stooped down to look at the dog. It was Schwartz who lay there, Schwartz, who had traced him out on that fatal night ; who had followed him all through his wanderings. Unconsciously Eric had fed him ; unconsciously patted and stroked him ; unconsciously modelled him and sold the model one day, to pay for his night's lodging. Her dog ! Marie's dog ! Why had it clung to him ? Why followed him ? At first he felt tempted to chase him from his sight ; but Schwartz got up, put his large paws on Eric's knees, and looked into his eyes. Eric looked at him. It was his own dog, the dog he reared himself, the dog he had taken out for his first hunt, the last time he had been at Kronenthal. Ernst had given him to Marie ; but the dog preferred his old master. How was it that he had not recognised him before ?

"Poor fellow, you are more faithful than I have been. I am not worthy to have you as my friend ; but remain with me, Schwartz."

He found several letters waiting for him. Two or three bore the post-mark of Stettin. These he flung into a drawer, and locking it, threw the key out of the window. "Nothing shall tempt me," he said, "to read those letters. Who knows if I might be able to resist their entreaties to return ?" And then he wandered out, day and night, in the first

days of the young spring. The faithful Schwartz followed him everywhere; and when he sat down on some venerable old ruin or green moss bank covered with purple violets, the dog would crouch beside him, and look up into his face.

One day he approached his unfinished picture; he wiped the dust off. His eyes rested on it for some time; then he took up a pencil, made some alterations in it, looked for his palette, put fresh colours on it, and was soon absorbed in his painting. Day after day he sat at his long-neglected easel. Peace came gradually back to his soul, and a calm look to his eye.

"Why should I lose my youth," he thought, "lamenting a fault I have not the power to undo? Time will conquer these feelings, and then, perhaps, I may be able some day to return to Kronenthal to my mother, and look upon Ernst—yes, even upon Marie—his wife—unmoved." Then he thought he would look at the letters he had shut up in the drawer when he first came home; but the drawer was locked, and the key nowhere to be found. During his researches after it, the letter which he had received from Ernst, asking him to come up to his marriage, fell under his hand. He opened it; it was full of joyous affection and buoyant happiness. Eric's heart throbbed with sympathetic affection, even as it throbbed when he had first read the letter. It ran thus:

Northernmost, he! Eric, my soul's beloved brother; your presence is necessary; to complete my happiness. I have wooed and won a pearl of surprising beauty. Come and be a witness to our union. Pardon me, dear Eric, if I have not told you of this before, but I was loth to trouble your brotherly heart with all my hopes and fears. The sun has at length broken through the clouds, and when you are here it will beam in full splendour on our marriage. Come as soon as you receive this; as soon as you arrive it will take place. Our mother is well; she hopes soon to have the joy of seeing you again. She counts the hours till you come as impatiently as I do. Do not refuse to come; without you our joy will be clouded with sorrow.

Your loving brother,

ERNST.

P.S. I do not tell you the name of my bride. I want to surprise you. She is an old friend of yours, though you have not seen her for years. Perhaps curiosity will speed you on your way.

There was the fatal mistake! Why not have told him who she was? Why not have described her? Why not have lingered with a lover's fondness over every feature? He would have recognised her at once; and at least he would have been innocent. For, he felt it now; he knew that he had loved her from the very day in which he had first seen her in the Sistine Chapel. But his heart was so calm, he was so self-possessed, even until the very moment in which he came to her rescue, that it would not have been difficult to repress all beyond.

The reading of this letter of Ernst's, and the painful thoughts it renewed, threw Eric

back in the progress he had made towards recovering his peace of mind. He resolved to make no attempt to open the drawer, and to leave the other letters where they were. On the arrival of another letter, with the same post-mark, he put that away, resolved to do nothing which could renew thoughts that he knew would only be a source of pain to him. His better feelings at last triumphed. His picture advanced. It was nearly finished. It was the Temptation in the Wilderness. And, whilst Eric put the last finishing touches to the white angels appearing in the foreground, he felt as if angels were ministering to him too.

He had triumphed; he had conquered the material life; he had regained the spiritual; and he thanked Heaven, and was happy.

One bright early summer day, who should stand beside him but Carl? Carl, his own dear friend! Schwartz bounded up joyously, and leaped upon him. "Carl, dear Carl!" cried Eric; and Carl could not speak for amazement.

"Sit down, Carl, I will tell you all." And Eric began from the night in which he made the fatal discovery that he loved his brother's bride. He hid nothing.

"It was only afterwards," said Carl, "whilst wandering in search of you, that I began to understand what discovery could alone have impelled you to such a flight. I have traced you from town to town, dear Eric. I recognised this ring of yours," producing it, and placing it in Eric's hand, "I also knew the model you made of Schwartz. His being with you helped me a good deal. I had some difficulty in persuading the possessor to let me have that model; but I have it safe. He thought a good deal of it, and the strange young man who sold it to him. I lost your track for some time when you passed through the Tyrol. It was not until a week ago that I heard from Ernst you had returned to Rome; and then I came here as fast as I could."

"And Ernst? Have you heard from Ernst lately? Is he married?"

"He is married. On his receiving your letter telling him you were at Rome, his marriage took place. It is now about three months ago. It was at your mother's desire that it was done. Ernst wanted to see you first." But Carl did not tell Eric that the marriage was solemnised when all thought his mother was dying. He reserved that for another time.

Gloomy thoughts did not remain long with Eric now: he had only to put them from him, and the cloud passed away. Carl and he worked together and walked together as of old, and their life was as happy as before. Carl cut a beautiful group of Schwartz struggling with the wolf, in pure white marble, for Katrine, as he had promised her; and the two friends packed it and sent it to Kronenthal with a loving letter

from Eric and friendly greetings from Carl. Carl told him by degrees of his mother's illness. He did not know much about it; he only knew that she had been very ill. Ernst's letters were very short, and he had only spoken of it in two—one at the first, when he had given it as a reason for not being able to leave her and go in search of Eric, and one in which he had told Carl under what circumstances his marriage was to take place. Eric's heart bled within him.

"I will go to them soon," he said. "I will go to my poor mother!"

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

AUTUMN was drawing near, and Carl declared that he must have a holiday: he had been working so hard.

"Come with me, Eric. Let us go and have a ramble somewhere. What do you say to Venice? It is four years since we were there."

"I can't go with you, Carl. I must finish my picture of the Wolf Hunt before Christmas. It is to be my wedding present to Ernst, you know, and I want to take it with me. Remember, too, we have work cut out besides. I shall have enough to do to get through it all."

"So you still abide by the resolution not to go to Kronenthal before Christmas?"

"I do not think I shall go before that," said Eric, smiling faintly. "I believe that I am heart-whole now, but it is as well not to try my strength too soon. You are coming with me, Carl."

"Well, considering that I was cheated out of my visit last year, I think I will; and I shall keep a better look out after you this time. Why, you might have died in that small auberge in Bavaria, and no one have been a bit the wiser for it."

"I am glad I did not, Carl. I should not have known what it is to conquer temptation and tread evil thoughts under foot."

So Carl departed, not for Venice, but for a fortnight's trip with some friends of his on a short cruise in a yacht to some of the Mediterranean islands. And Eric returned to his picture, and worked with redoubled pleasure, when he thought how pleased Ernst would be with it. And Schwartz sat for his portrait again, and slept at his master's feet between each sitting. It was a representation of the self-same hunt in which Ernst had saved Eric's life, and Schwartz was grappling with one wolf whilst Ernst, standing over his prostrate brother, held another at bay. Eric smiled and thought of the time when he would unpack his picture before the eyes of Ernst and his wife. He thought of calling her, sister! He was strong now and could bear it.

Carl had been gone nearly ten days; he would be home soon; and Eric thought he would go down to the quay to inquire if the marble had arrived out of which the two friends were going to cut a group. He had

been hard at work all the morning, and wanted a little fresh air. So, calling Schwartz, who lay under the table sleeping, he went out, not even locking the door; and, telling the young matron who kept his rooms for him and acted as portress that he would be back very soon, he went down towards the quay. Turning the corner of a street, he suddenly met two ladies, face to face. One of them was Marie! He saw her for a moment; felt a sudden choking, a violent throbbing in his head, and saw no more. He turned before he had been recognised. He flew over the burning pavement, nor stopped till he got into the country far beyond the suburbs. He could not rest till miles and miles he had left the city far behind him; and then he sat down and thought. Was this his boasted strength?

He rose and walked on. A cooler breeze was beginning to temper the fierce heat of the afternoon. He saw a small village at a little distance. The fierce emotions which had arisen in his breast on so suddenly meeting Marie began gradually to subside. The road he followed wound through rich fields; where the purple grapes blushed through the green leaves of the vines, twined in the trees and fell in luxuriant festoons from branch to branch. The bright cicada sung lustily among the stones which formed the low walls, the boundaries of fields where the yellow corn fell beneath the sickles of the sunburnt labourers, their swarthy brows bound round with bright-coloured handkerchiefs. Farther on, a beautiful little brook murmured over the large loose stones in its bed, and fell into a small hollow, where some dark, curly-headed children, with sparkling eyes, were dipping a brown pitcher, and where Schwartz cooled his hot tongue. But Eric heeded not all this beauty; which, at another time, would have excited his warmest admiration. He was holding fierce communion with himself.

He reached the village he had seen at a distance. As he entered it, he looked round for some one of whom he could inquire the way, or ask where he could find a lodging for the night. He was determined that he would not return to Rome—at any rate not till he had heard from Carl. He would wait in that village; he would write to Carl from thence. When Carl could assure him that she was gone, then he would return; but he must give up all thoughts of Kronenthal that winter. He and Carl would spend it somewhere else; perhaps in Paris, perhaps London; but trust himself where she was—no! he dare not do that, now!

As he advanced up the street of the little village, he found a child sitting on a doorstep weeping bitterly. At sight of Schwartz, she was frightened. Eric drew near; and, sitting on the step beside her, took her on his knee, and tried to soothe her. She told him her father was very ill—her mother

said he would die. After a little while he prevailed on her to lead him to her father, and entered a low white cottage. Ascending a narrow staircase, he found himself standing beside a bed, on which lay a man, still young, but emaciated and parched with fever. A pale young woman sat near his pillow: his wife, the mother of the little child. Strong compassion awoke in Eric's heart. He comforted the weeping wife, and gave her money to buy food for herself and child, and medicines for her husband. As he was leaving the cottage, he was met at the door by a venerable old man, the priest of the small village. Eric saluted him with deep respect; said he had just been to see the poor people above; and he thought the man looked very ill. Then the priest, after learning from him how he came to the village (he had been out rambling, and had lost his way, he said), offered to conduct him to the house of a parishioner, where he would be well lodged and taken care of.

"I am afraid the fever will spread; we have another case in the village," the old priest said to Eric, as they walked along.

"Who is it?" asked Eric.

"An artist, who came here to paint an altar-piece for us. It was going on rapidly, and was to have been finished before this. Only a fortnight ago he was seized with this fever; and a very bad state he is in, poor fellow. Bad enough for him, but bad for us too. We expected the painting to have been ready before this, and we had appointed the day after to-morrow for a grand festa. The neighbouring gentry had promised to be present at it; some rich Englishmen from Rome too; and we expected to make a good collection for our poor against the winter. But now," added the old priest, sorrowfully, "we shall have no festa, no collection; and our poor will starve next winter, I fear."

"Is there no one you know of who could finish the painting?" asked Eric.

"I have written to Rome," answered the old priest, "but all the artists seem either to be so busily employed, that they cannot leave their work; or they do not care to finish a picture already begun. I have written to a young Englishman I know there; but he also is away, and not expected home for five days. I am sure he would have come had he known our strait, and he will come when he gets my letter; but it will be too late then."

"Where is this painting?" asked Eric. "Might I see it?"

"O! certainly, certainly," answered the old priest; and he led the way to the village church, a large and ancient one, and they entered the building together; leaving Schwartz stretched on the pavement outside.

They went towards the high altar. Above it, and just beneath three beautiful painted windows, hung the unfinished picture; on

a level with it, was the scaffold on which the artist had worked.

"We cannot take the scaffold down before the painting is finished; it cost too much to put it up. The painting is given to us by a kind lady friend who lives in the neighbourhood. We were to find the artist, and she was to pay him. It was she who suggested the idea of a festa when it was finished, and a collection for the poor."

"Is there not something wanting in the group to complete the idea?"

"It is 'The child Christ teaching in the Temple,'" answered the priest.

"But the principal figure is wanting," said Eric; "the Divine Child."

"True—true."

Eric stood gazing on the half-finished canvas; a glow spread over his countenance, a bright light beamed from his eyes, and still he stood gazing in silence upon it. The priest looked at him; his face was changed. From the time that he had taken the child on his knees in the street; had spoken comfort to the weeping mother; had entered into the old priest's distress; peace had been dawning in his mind again. And now the full notes of an organ swelled through the church, and a beautiful tenor voice poured forth the words of a Latin anthem:

"The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because He hath appointed me to preach good tidings to the meek; He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted; to proclaim liberty to the captives, the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."

Yes; "the opening of the prison to them that are bound." The voice dwelt on that verse again and again: "the opening of the prison to them that are bound;" the loosing of the dark chains bound around the captives of Passion. The divine words came floating down the aisle; Eric felt them thrilling in his soul.

The melody changed; a full chorus of voices burst forth in answer back to that divine announcement: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings; good tidings of peace; that sayeth unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! Break forth into joy, sing together, oh ye waste places of Jerusalem! Know ye that to-day hath He spoken. Behold it is He!"

A Divine vision passed before Eric's eyes; he saw the Glorious Child standing in the vacant place; the Deliverer from the power of the Evil One. As the music ceased, he spoke to the priest:

"My father, I am an artist; I will finish the picture. Where are the colours and the pencils of the poor artist who lies ill?"

"They can be fetched, my son," said the good old priest, trembling with joy.

"I must begin instantly. I cannot sleep till it is done. Can I have a light this evening—one that will burn all night?"

The colours were fetched, and he selected those he wanted, by the fast declining rays of the sun. Preparations for a good strong light were made; and the good father promised to come and superintend it himself. Before the twilight had ceased, the figure was sketched in by a rapid and masterly hand. When the good priest came according to his promise, to light the tall wax candles which were to illuminate the night vigil, he was astonished at the progress that had been made. Silently the old man mounted the scaffold; lighted the thick tapers in the tall, massive gold candlesticks, that stood on either side of the picture; silently descended, glided over the pavement, and put some bread and wine in a corner which Eric had pointed out. And then he stood and watched him. Rapidly he sketched, rapidly put in the colours. The soft night breeze came in at the open window; and the broad full moon poured down a flood of silver light through the many-coloured panes, and strewed the pavement with the varied hues of the rainbow. Everything was so hushed, so still, that the hum of the fire-flies was heard as they danced beneath the trees which overshadowed the sleeping dead in the churchyard; and a full-throated bird sang all night in a neighbouring wood.

Midnight struck. In the deep silence, the muffled strokes on the bell, high up in the tower, throbbled through the church, as if dealt by the hand of some mighty and invisible giant. The old priest went out; Eric had not seen him; he was absorbed in his work, body and soul. And there, by the light of the huge wax tapers, in the deep silence of the night, his vision sprang into being beneath his rapid, skilful fingers. The moon faded, the bright stars vanished from the face of the glorious sun, all nature sprang into life; and, when the good old priest stood again in the church behind Eric, he found him still at work. The sun streaming in through the east windows, through gorgeous hues of crimson and blue, poured a purple radiance round his head. The father stood amazed. He saw the figure of the Holy Child in all its beauty. The countenance was entirely finished. The calm blue eyes seemed to pour down a flood of light on the amazed doctors, listening intently to the words proceeding from the parted lips. The shining gold curls rolled down upon the shoulders; the pure white festal robe, in which He had "come up to Jerusalem" flowed down to the pavement, but did not conceal the sandalled feet. He seemed to be in the act of descending the steps, around and upon which the doctors were grouped. The left foot was on a step higher than the right, and was lifted, as if the child were coming forward, perhaps to descend to the very steps of the altar itself. The left arm was raised, the hand pointing to heaven; the right hung down by his side, grasping a parchment-roll from which he seemed to be expounding.

The priest stood in silent wonder. Eric was now busy on the folds of the pure linen garment. He did not notice that any one was in the church, any more than he had noticed the old man's presence on the evening before. The hours passed, and he still lingered over his work, loth to part with it, for, to the good father's eye, it seemed finished; still he did not like to speak to him; and if he had spoken, Eric would not have heard him, so wholly was he absorbed in his work. The priest saw with concern that the bread and wine had not been touched. Fain would he have asked him to come down and eat something, but he dared not interrupt the work, and the rapt worker. Some one came to fetch him to the bed-side of the man ill of fever; they thought he was dying. He left the church. Schwartz still lay where his master had left him. Some hours elapsed before the priest returned. When, at last, he was released from the numerous claims on his attention, he came back to the church. The painting was finished. The artist was no longer on the scaffold. He appeared to be kneeling on the steps of the altar, as if returning thanks for his finished work. The good father went up to him, he was lying prostrate at the foot of the altar, his head on the first step. The priest raised him; he thought he was dead, but he had only fainted. Weakened by his previous illness; the fierce emotions he had experienced on again meeting Marie, the rapid flight from Rome, the night watch, the long fast, the absorption in his work—all had been too much for him. The priest called for assistance; he was lifted and carried gently to the priest's house, and laid on the priest's bed. The scaffold was taken down; the people flocked to the church to see the wonderful figure of the Holy Child; the report of its beauty spread abroad. Next day the church was full to overflowing; and, while the anthem swelled down the aisles, and the people worshipped, and money was poured into the box for the poor, Eric lay tossing in the delirium of the fever that was heavy on the village.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

CARL returned to Rome three days before the expiration of the fortnight. They had encountered a squall at sea which had damaged the yacht so much that it was thought prudent to bring her home for repairs. Refreshed by his holiday, invigorated by the sea-breeze, and excited by the danger they had been in, Carl stepped lightly along the street which led to his and Eric's lodgings. He had a whole budget of fresh ideas and new thoughts, to impart to Eric, and he anticipated with pleasure the work they were to begin together, and wondered whether Eric had been to look after the marble, as he promised. He bounded up the steps of the old palace, and met the portress before he reached the door of the studio.

"I have a letter for you, signor ; it is down stairs," she said, "it came for you three days ago."

"I will go with you and fetch it," said Carl. Is the Signor Eric up ?"

"No, signor ; but there is a lady and gentleman in the signor's studio. They have been here several times since signor Eric went out. The lady and gentleman came to-day to see if you were come home."

"Eric gone out !" said Carl. "When did he go out ? This morning ?"

"No, signor. Two days ago."

"Two days ago ! And where is he gone ?"

"I do not know, signor."

"What lady and gentleman ?"

"I do not know, signor. The gentleman asked if you had returned, and said he would wait a little and see if you or signor Eric came in."

Carl ran up stairs to the studio ; he opened the door, and entered. He stepped back in amazement—he could scarcely believe his eyes when they fell upon Ernst and Katrine.

"And where is Marie, Madame Walderthorn," he asked, hesitatingly, after the first hearty greetings were over. "She is not ill, I hope ?"

It was now Ernst's turn to look at Carl in amazement. Katrine smiled. "Why, this is Madame Walderthorn," he said, laying his hand on Katrine's arm.

"Whew !" said Carl, and drew a long breath ; and then sitting down, fanned himself with his broad-brimmed hat, and burst out laughing, with tears at the same time pouring from his eyes. "Why," he said, when he had recovered his breath, "we both thought it was Mademoiselle Marie you had married."

"What ?" said Ernst. "Who thought so ? Eric ?"

"Yes, and so did I," said Carl. "I am sure I cannot exactly tell you, how or where, either he or I got the impression that you and she were betrothed lovers last Christmas. But we were both certain of it. It was the cause of his flight from Rabenstein."

Ernst was thunderstruck. Carl told him everything he knew of the business, beginning from the meeting in the Sistine chapel to the hour when he found him again in Rome.

"Poor suffering Eric !" cried Ernst. "It was Katrine who told me of your adventures that night, and the rescue they had received at your hands. It was Katrine, who told me also, that Eric loved Marie ; and that she returned his affection. I had been speaking to my mother and Marie's parents when I came into Eric's room, and that evening was to have seen their betrothal. But how came you to be so deceived, Carl ? Did not I tell you that Katrine was my betrothed, or Franz—did you not see him again ?"

"No, you said nothing to me that night,"

said Carl ; "nor did you ever mention it in any of your letters. I suppose you never dreamed of our mistake ; even in your letter announcing your marriage, and telling me Eric was at Rome, you did not mention your bride's name. And as for Franz, I have never seen him, or heard from him since ; and, if you remember, I never returned to the room after we had searched the woods. No ! Eric told me, and I never doubted but that he knew all about it ; therefore, I never asked any one. Why should I ? But, good Heaven, what surprise and joy for him ! Where is his mother now—the lady of Kronenthal ?"

"She is herself again, and here with us at Rome. She is at our lodgings with Marie. We have brought her here for change of air. She has been ill ; and is even now far from well, poor child."

It was true. Marie, since the night when Eric fled from Rabenstein, had drooped like a broken flower. All through the agony of the night of fruitless search, she had scarcely uttered a word ; and during the weeks of suspense which passed, before she heard that he was safe at Rome, she had scarcely seemed alive. Her greatest consolation appeared to consist in being allowed to watch beside the bed of his mother, when she lay, long, at the point of death. She would retire to pray in the oratory, where the picture had been hung, which Eric had brought for his mother, the picture in which she saw herself so lovingly, so well remembered.

When weeks and months passed away, and he did not return, but only wrote and said that he was happy, and would come to see them soon, the hope which the picture inspired faded away from her heart, and she became very ill. When the group of Schwartz struggling with the Wolf, arrived, Katrine, to whom it was sent, gave it to Marie, who was still living at Kronenthal, with Eric's mother, and Ernst and his wife. It was carried into her room, and sometimes she would stand and look at it for hours, unheeding those who spoke to her. At last, as summer approached, Ernst determined to go to Rome, and see Eric, since he would not answer any of his letters, or inquiries as to the cause of his flight. At first he thought he would go alone, and then he determined to take Katrine and Marie with him ; but as Marie was still very weak, their journey was put off from week to week, till the autumn was at hand. They wanted to surprise Eric, so Ernst took care not to write to him.

Their precautions had been defeated. On the first morning after their arrival,

"Where can Eric be ?" asked Ernst, "surely he will return soon ?"

"I cannot think," said Carl. "I have a letter here, it may be from him. I will open it, if you will allow me, Madame Walderthorn ?"

"Oh, pray do !" she said. "But pray call

me Katrine. You call my sister, Marie; and we have known trouble enough together to make us all brothers and sisters."

"I am so accustomed to hear Eric speak of your sister as Marie," said Carl. "But this letter is not from him," he added, in a tone of disappointment. "It is from a friend of mine who was very kind to me once, when I was very ill—indeed, saved my life—and what is most vexatious is, that it will oblige me to leave Rome for a few days. He implores me to go and finish an altar-piece, left in a half unfinished state by the illness of the artist who began it. My friend is the Curé of Arquè, a small village about four leagues off. I will write it down for you. You had better come here, and wait for Eric's return."

"I will wait here all day long until he comes," said Ernst. "We must tell my mother and Marie the clue we have to his wild flight from Rabenstein. How it will gladden Marie's heart to know that she is so devotedly loved!"

"And we must bring her and our mother here to see this beautiful picture of the wolf-hunt," said Katrine.

Carl hired a conveyance, and went to Arquè, the small village where his friend lived. He arrived there the day after the festa, and met the good curé.

"I knew you would come," said the father, his face brightening with pleasure, as he shook the young man's hand; "but I am sorry that you have had your journey for nothing. The picture is finished by another painter, and the festa took place yesterday. Come and see it!"

On their way to the church, he told Carl how he had met with the strange artist. At first Carl listened abstractedly, for he was thinking where could Eric be; but when the curé began to describe this artist, Carl listened attentively. By this time they had reached the church, and went up to the picture.

Carl instantly recognised the hand. "It is he! It is Eric! Where is he?"

"He lies at my house, my son. I grieve to say he has the fever."

"O Eric, Eric!" cried Carl; and tears of grief stood in his eyes. "Bring me to him, my father. He is my friend, my brother."

As Carl entered the room where Eric lay, Schwartz, the faithful Schwartz, leaped up and fawned on him.

Carl bent over Eric's bed. He gave no sign of recognition. His eyes were glazed with fever; his cheeks burnt as if with fire; his lips were parched.

"I will write to his brother, and send it by the driver who brought me here," said Carl. "I will stay here till his brother comes."

The same evening brought Ernst and his mother. They had not deemed it right to tell Marie of this affliction, and Katrine had remained with her in their absence.

They had gone to Carl (she was told), who had found some traces of Eric.

After he had seen his brother, Ernst went back to Rome, at the urgent solicitation of their mother, who begged him to return to Katrine and Marie, and make the best story he could to the latter to account for her remaining behind. So the mother and the good priest watched beside the bed of the sufferer. Nothing could induce Carl to take any rest. He shared the night vigils and the anxious cares of the poor mother. He nursed his friend with all the tenderness of a woman.

For days the struggle between life and death went on. But it did not last long. He would live, they said. And then Katrine told Marie all.

When Eric opened his eyes to consciousness they gazed upon the loving face of the mother who bent over him. They closed again in quiet joy. He never asked how she came there; he was content to know that she was with him. His first words were to Carl; he asked why Ernst was not there? Carl could not understand how he knew that they were all in Rome. He could not think why he took it so quietly that his mother was with him. At last, when she was out of the room, he told Carl how he had met Marie on his way to the quay, to look after the marble, and how he had fied at once.

When he was sufficiently strong to be removed, an easy English carriage was sent from Rome for him. He was taken, at his own desire, to his own lodgings. There, after a few days, he regained so much strength, that his mother ventured to tell him that Ernst was in Rome, "with his wife Katrine." She saw that she had done well to use precaution with him; for when he heard that Katrine was Ernst's wife, he turned white, and had nearly fainted.

"Katrine married to Ernst! Mother! Katrine married to Ernst!"

"Hush, my son. We know all. All shall now have a happy termination. Ernst is waiting outside. Will you see him? He has seen you already. When you were delirious with the fever he was with you."

"Oh, mother, mother!" cried Eric, "where is my noble brother?"

Ernst came in. Eric rose to meet him, and fell upon his neck. Long, long the brothers held each other, locked in a close embrace.

"And Marie? When shall I see her?" said Eric.

"Now, dear Eric," said Ernst. Eric received her from the hands of his brother, folded her in his arms, and once again clasped her to his throbbing heart.

And so there was another festa in Arquè. The old priest, who had so tenderly nursed Eric, gave him and his bride the nuptial benediction at the foot of the very altar, in the very church. Young girls strewed the path of the bride with the brightest flowers of the late autumn. And, after the cere-

mony, the bride and bridegroom started for Vienna, where Carl joined them at the end of a month. And then all three went to Kronenthal, and spent the winter there. Ernst had his wedding present, and the day that it was hung up over the mantelpiece in the withdrawing-room, there was a grand party at Kronenthal. Some of the guests did not know but what they liked a small picture of ladies attacked by wolves, quite as well as, if not better than, the large one. However, opinions were very much divided about that. Carl, and Ernst, and Eric, had some capital sport together; and Schwartz killed three more wolves before he went back to Rome in the spring, with his young mistress: to whom he now appeared to have transferred his allegiance. Eric bought a beautiful little villa in the neighbourhood of Arquì. Every winter they returned to Kronenthal. Carl often joined them both there and at Arquì. The last time he was expected in the north, grand preparations were making at the castle, to receive with becoming honors the blooming young bride he was bringing with him from the banks of the far-off Thames; and to whom he wanted to show what warmth of hospitality was to be found in the frost and snow of a Pomeranian winter.

A WAY TO REMEMBER.

Most self-educated men, who for the most part have to win their bread and their information together, feel that the pressing and material business of life has a tendency to interfere with the memory of the scientific facts or of the philosophical truths which, in the intervals of leisure, they have been at pains to acquire. Now, there are many every-day familiar things which, by any one sincerely in earnest, may be made powerful helps to the memory, and to habits of reflection, through the association of ideas. It may be useful to illustrate this position by a few examples.

There are few readers who have travelled by any sort of carriage, who could have failed to remark the appearances of motion impressed upon the landscape. These are due, not to the landscape, but to the carriage. Such simple phenomena are easy of association with the motion of the earth and the immobility of the sun; they read many lessons to us on the difference between real and apparent motion.

Among the highest truths in nature, is the now confessed universality of motion. The fixed stars are no longer fixed in the ordinary sense, and the belief of thousands of years that they were absolutely fixed, is now proved to have arisen from an illusion of the senses. All are now conceded to be moving around each other with marvellous velocity; though, from the distance, the motion appears to us to be remarkably slow. The sun himself has his circuit of travel,

measured by ages. In the words of a modern astronomer, "mutation and change are every where found; all is in motion; orbits expanding or contracting, their planes rocking up or down, their perihelia and nodes sweeping in opposite directions round the sun." It is well that we are likewise told, that "the limits of all these changes are fixed; that these limits can never be passed, and that at the end of a vast period, amounting to many millions of years, the entire range of fluctuation will have been accomplished, the entire system, planets, orbits, inclinations, eccentricities, perihelia, and nodes, will have regained their original values and places, and the great bell of eternity will have then sounded One!"

Now among many things which we have not mentioned, but which are nevertheless involved in the above statement, there are not a few that are extremely difficult to be remembered, but which it would be serviceable to retain in memory by the aid of familiar associations. Recurring again to the phenomena of travel; (for earth is to man none other than a magnificent chariot wherein he rides around that great central luminary, the sun, in the midst of planetary systems without end;) we may again refer to the apparent motion of the objects through which the passenger on the railway progresses. While passing in a direct line through a forest of trees, those trees towards which he is moving will appear to open out or separate from each other, while those left behind will appear to close up. Now this same opening-out, and this same closing-up, are actually the criteria employed to determine the astronomer touching the direction in which man on this earth is travelling through the starry forest in the skies. Borne along by the movement of the sun, the astronomer accordingly seeks a point in the heavens where the stars appear to be increasing their mutual distances. Finding this point, he next looks behind him in the opposite direction, and there perceiving the stars to close up on each other, he concludes that he has found the direction in which he is moving. In this manner it was, in fact, that Herschel determined that the solar system is travelling through space towards a point in the constellation Hercules. Now, many minds acting on this simple association, like the actor who receives the cue of a word or two from the prompter and then remembers his whole part, may, from the mere force of such a system, remember the whole of the discoveries of Argelander and Maedler. The sun, with its planets, will be seen sweeping towards the north pole of the heavens,—in fact, towards the star marked π in the constellation Hercules,—with a velocity which causes it to pass over a distance equal to thirty-three millions three hundred and fifty thousand miles every year. The star, Alcyone, will be recalled as the principal star in the group of

the Pleiades, now supposed to occupy the centre of gravity, and to be at present the sun about which the universe of stars composing our astral system are all revolving; the light from Alcyone requiring a period of five hundred and thirty-seven years to traverse the distance of the sun, from the central orb about which he performs his mighty revolutions; and the enormous term of eighteen million two hundred thousand years being required to be accomplished, if we may rely on the angular motion of the sun and system, as already determined, before the solar orb, with all its planets, satellites, and comets will have completed one revolution around its grand centre.

Still keeping to the incidents of travel, and the phenomenon of forest trees. Who has not observed, while journeying along a railway, how the trees of a forest apparently whirl around each other—an appearance produced by the rapid speed of the carriage? This incident, familiar as it is, may serve to raise habitually in the mind the notion of the parallax of the fixed stars. Parallax is the apparent change in the place of an object, occasioned by the real change in the place of the spectator. Since the parallax motion of the forest trees becomes less and less perceptible as the velocity of the travelling beholder diminishes, or as the distance of the seemingly moving object becomes greater, it is evident that to measure the distance of the fixed stars is equivalent to determining the amount of the parallax change in their relative positions, occasioned by the actual change of the positions from which they may be viewed by a spectator on the earth's surface. The spectator will, on the prompting of this remarkable suggestion, probably remember that when the orbital motion of the earth was first propounded by Copernicus, and it was asserted to revolve in an ellipse of nearly six hundred million miles in circumference, and with a motion so swift that it passed over no less than sixty-eight thousand miles in every hour of time, the opponents of the great philosopher exclaimed, that this doctrine could not be true; "for," said they, "if we are sweeping around the sun in this vast orbit, and with this amazing velocity, then ought the fixed stars to whirl round each other, as do the forest trees to the traveller flying swiftly by them." To the unassisted eye this, which was the case in fact, did not appear; and the Copernicans were without a satisfactory reply. They could only venture a suggestion that, owing perhaps to the enormous distance of the fixed stars, no perceptible change was operated by the revolution of the earth in its orbit; in other words, that the pole of the heavens revolved in a curve of two hundred million miles in diameter, but that such was the distance of the spheres of the fixed stars, that this curve was reduced to an invisible point. After a contest of three

hundred years' duration, the truth uttered by Copernicus, but not sufficiently illustrated, is at length indisputably established.

Sometimes things of a grosser sort will serve to make those of a finer quality not only more appreciable, but more intelligible. Questions in regard to the subtle essence, Light, are difficult because of their fineness; but it has been found possible to make them clear by resembling the subjects they regard to tangible objects, such as gun-boats, and rifle-balls, and gun-barrels. One of the last-named articles is supposed to be placed on a moving boat, and it is proposed so to direct a rifle on shore as to fire a ball down the said barrel. Now, let the two rifles be on the same exact level, and the axes of the barrels be made precisely to coincide,—would the ball from the one pass down the other, in case the fixed one were fired at the exact instant the muzzles came precisely opposite to each other? The uninstructed would be apt to answer yes; not because the scientific reply confidently, No. It is necessary that the fixed rifle should be fixed before the moving one comes opposite, and the rifleman must make an allowance for the time the ball requires to move from the one gun to the other, and also for the velocity with which the moving piece is descending the stream. In order that the ball from the shore may be caused to enter the muzzle of the moving rifle, this computation must be accurately made. But further conditions have also to be considered. For instance, it must be recollected that while the ball is progressing down the barrel, the barrel itself is progressing down the tide, and that, in order to avoid the pressure of the ball against the upper side of the barrel, the latter must be fixed in an inclined position, and that the bottom of the barrel must be as far up the stream as it will descend by the boat's motion during the progress of the ball down the barrel;—in fine, that the direction in which the barrel of the rifle which should receive the ball must be placed, is determined both by the velocity of the ball, and the velocity of the boat which bears the rifle.

But what has this very material parable to do with the theory and properties of light? First of all, we liken the particles of light that are shot from the fixed stars to the balls that are shot from the fixed rifle. The gun-barrel on the moving boat represents the tube of the star-gazer, and the boat represents the earth which bears him while itself sweeping around in its orbit. Down the axis of that tube the particles of light, like the aforesaid rifle-balls, must pass, in order to reach the eye of the observer. As the velocity of the earth's motion has been ascertained, and as the amount by which the telescope must be inclined, to cause the light to enter, has been determined, the velocity of the light itself becomes known from these two data; and thus the previously determined value of this

incredible velocity is satisfactorily confirmed. For the rest, the reality of the earth's motion is absolutely necessary, to render the phenomena at all explicable. Such an illustration may serve to explain to the grossest understanding how it is that, owing to the progressive motion of light, and the revolution of the earth in its orbit, the celestial bodies cannot occupy in the heavens the places which they appear to fill. The particles of light from Jupiter take nearly forty minutes in passing from the planet to the observer's eye. Meanwhile the earth has progressed in its orbit some thirty-seven thousand miles, and the spectator borne along with it must see the planet, not where it actually is, but where it was in appearance some forty minutes before. The same effect in kind is produced on the places of the fixed stars, and is called aberration. To bring all this to mind with clearness and precision, it needs only to think of the gun-boat, the rifle-barrel, and the rifle-ball.

THE SANDIMAN MYSTERY.

It is just fourteen years ago since I discovered my first grey hair ; it was flourishing (confound it!) in the most ostentatious manner in my left whisker, and had turned, as I believe, from black to white in a single night. It was the morning of my birthday. I had risen full of matured youth—I was but two-and-forty—and in the best of spirits. From a baseless dream of matrimonial subjection I had awakened to find myself alone. I had said in my heart, "There is no need, Harry Loveless, to take to thyself a wife these ten years." In the pride of my manhood, in the glory—if I may say so—of my wounded beauty I was smitten; that spectral form which stood out from the raven masses of its fellows was a warning not to be neglected. Some evidence of the breaking up of my system had been apparent to me for years, which I had striven to account for by temporary causes, and they now became fearfully significant. I could not, thenceforward, conceal from myself that the button of the waistband of my trousers was better left unfastened; that I felt happier when out of my little patent leather boots. What then was my conduct upon the discovery of these facts? I eradicated the grey hair with care, and burnt it; I became thinner-waisted, smaller-footed than ever; I was gayer—brighter from that moment; danced more (waltz, especially), sang more (sentimental ballads, always), and gave up whist entirely: in short, apoplectic in feeling, I became quite boyish in manner; for I felt there was no time to lose in taking unto myself a wife.

In the place where I resided the supply of young ladies far exceeded the demand. On my right hand dwelt the eight Miss Nogoos; two red, and one with a squint; on my left

the five Miss Sansous; all so alike that making love to one would be making four mistakes; and might lead, eventually, to the most complicated bigamy. The two Miss Holdfasts—both in years, and father commercial—were within a stone's throw; the terrace towards the town was filled with half-pay military officers who had daughters unattached; the terrace towards the sea with half-pay naval ditto, with daughters waiting for sailing orders in the brig Cupid. To all of these the amount of my income, down to the pence and shillings, had been interesting for years: what I paid a month for my lodgings; what I had been allowed at college; how many horses there had been to my father's hearse; all that could throw light, in fact, upon my social position, had been objects of their closest inquiry. If I had had the misfortune to be amongst the landed gentry, they would have known my age to a minute, for Burke—the only Burke they had ever heard of—was never out of their minds. The few military men who shone amidst our petticoat parties at Sandwich were dancible, flirtable, go-down-to-supper-withable enough, but they were far from eligible; the three men in the regiment who had more than a hundred a-year besides their pay, were, singularly enough, the only married ones. In such a state of things, then, Harry Loveless needed not to have gone to the length of advertising for a bride.

I know not to whose bow and spear—to whose crinoline and "whiskers"—I might have speedily fallen a prey, had not the Sandiman family, fourteen years ago, arrived amongst us. There was a Mr. Sandiman, and there were three Miss Sandimans; and there was Mrs. Sandiman; we knew there was a Mrs. S. by the cards which they left, sparsely enough, in returning calls, "Mrs. Sandiman and the Misses Sandiman" (or the Miss Sandimen, as we were wont to term them), but we knew nothing more of her for many months. The family lived a retired life, and picked and chose out of their neighbours for their friends. They were therefore described by some as "nice people when you came to know them," but by the majority as "not moving in our best circles by any means;" the young ladies were certainly far too good-looking to be popular at Sandwich. In consideration of their charms and of the execution they effected amongst the hundred-and-first, they were denominated respectively by that gallant corps—"Battle," "Murder," and "Sudden Death." They were all three blondes, but "Sudden Death" was the blondest. I saw her first upon the sea-beach, walking and reading at the same time, upon a rather windy July day; her parasol—a pagoda parasol it was, of no sort of use, but of the greatest possible ornament—was carried off suddenly by a zephyr and revolved rapidly in the direction of the deep. I started immediately—as also did the button of my waistband—in headlong pursuit, and arrived

at the water's edge, just too late. To have wetted my patent leather boots was of course out of the question; but I did the next best thing that I could have done, and I sent my dog in after the fair craft. I restored it to its proprietress. A bow the next time we met; a bow and a smile the time after that; a shake of the hand the third day, culminated, on the fourth, to an introduction to her two sisters and to Mr. Sandiman. I then met them daily, by accident, in their marine walks; I sent them cards of admission to the Bachelors' Ball. O the stratagems put in practice by our female Sandwithians to procure these! the heartburnings they cause; the lifelong feuds which year after year they engender or inflame; the envy, the malice that are brought forth by them—it is enough to make the angels weep!

At last the Sandimans asked me to dinner. These approaches to intimacy, although carried forward with exquisite skill, took a considerable time to accomplish; and yet I had seen nothing of the commandant upon the other side. Mrs. Sandiman had not yet shown herself; her lieutenant, Pegton—a maiden aunt of the young ladies—had been their duenna in their rambles; their chaperone at the ball. Now, said I to myself, I shall meet the mother; and I said it triumphantly, for nobody else at Sandwith had as yet enjoyed that privilege.

I arrived a little too early, and was received by my Arabella, alone. I had thus an opportunity of making ample mental notes of her accomplishments;—manners easy; dress quiet perfection; no allusions to the aristocracy; no observations about the weather;—I began to think her exactly the sort of person to sit at the head of a table; I considered how 'Mrs. Harry Loveless' would read upon a visiting card. Nothing to be ashamed of as to sisters-in-law: both entered gracefully; did not call their sister Bella; did not attempt to make her uncomfortable through spite, nor to cut her out the least in my affections: father-in-law just as he should be, commonplace—your clever father-in-laws are always borrowing your money—but eminently respectable; head bald and shining; countenance bland; voice pompous, waistcoat arched: Lieutenant Pegton, bony, knuckly, with iron-grey moustache, but looking as if she had money in the funds. Still no mother-in-law. I thought of all that Sandwith had been saying about her: that she was mad; that she drank; that she had an incurable disease, supposed to have been long extinct among the human species; that she had a pig's face; that she had no nose. Mysuspense became intolerable. "Shall I not have the pleasure of seeing Mrs. Sandiman this evening?" I said to the Lieutenant, as I took her down to dinner. "I fear not, Mr. Loveless," she replied. "My sister is at present indisposed."

She was always indisposed, it seemed. It was the answer people got when they called; it was the reply that was written to invitations; and yet none of the six Sandwith doctors had had a chance at her. But, the lower orders had been more fortunate than the upper: the butcher had seen her, and affirmed that she was "tolerably good to look at for an old 'un," and "deuced sharp about prime cuts;" the maids of all work had seen her in the early morning upon her lonely way to the sea-shore to bathe; she had been taken to church, thickly veiled, with the rest of the family, but the frigidest of bows prevented near approach to the Sandimen upon the Sabbath days; her own domestics had been fed and pumped in vain—they only affirmed that she was subject to tantrums, which appeared to be a common complaint of mistresses, and failed to satisfy the curious. After dinner I perceived Mr. S. was suffering torture in the attempt to keep me company and himself awake, so I proposed a nap; and when his breathing began to get stertorous I stole up-stairs to the young ladies. No one asleep in the drawing-room; no huddling over the fire with gowns drawn up to their knees for comfort, while they abused their guests for amusement. All at work, or reading, except Lieutenant Pegton, who was above-stairs with the invalid. The whole thing began to wear in my eyes the appearance of business—of marriage. Sudden Death was positively charming by firelight. Wouldsheplay? Certainly. Would she sing? With pleasure. Was she fond of biography? She was; and of the right biographies. I was on the point of calling her Arabella before them all; but changed it just in time into Arethusa and sea songs in general. I had determined not to commit myself till I had seen my future mother-in-law with my own eyes. I knew what frightful accidents have happened through such a rash proceeding; how Charlie Blake, of the Heavies, for instance, married a wife in that manner, with the understanding only that her money came from the mother's side; and indeed it did so, for she had earned it by going about the country in a caravan and exhibiting herself, being half white and half black, like a domino. Battle presently left the room for a thimble, and Murder followed her in pursuit of a crochet-needle; directly that Murder was out, and there were no witnesses, I whispered "Arabella," in my softest tones. She did not reply in words, but her fingers, which happened at that moment to be entangled in mine, returned the slightest of pressures. "I am going to ask you a question," I continued, "which, I trust, you will not take ill." Her little hand trembled violently, and I think she expected to be asked for that in marriage, at once; but such was not my intention. "Will you, will you, dear Arabella," I went on, "permit

me to have a little conversation with your mother?"

I felt the dear creature growing as cold as marble while I said this; there was evidently something seriously amiss about Mrs. S. I declare I was so in love at that instant, that I would have compounded for an Albino upon the spot. "My mother, Mr. Loveless," she replied, "is at present indisposed;" and immediately afterwards the Lieutenant entered the room, and put a stop to all explanation.

For a week after that interview I rose with the lark—or, at least, very little after seven o'clock—in hopes of catching my future mother-in-law at her morning walks; but to no purpose. After that, I tried an hour still earlier, almost before the sun was up, and then I caught her: she went out to bathe, it seemed, at six o'clock. The sanguine old lady evidently trusted that nobody would be about at that hour, for she was attired in marine costume; her head was enveloped in something exceedingly like a sponge-bag; she wore blue spectacles; her form was rolled round in what appeared to be a bed-curtain, and she had yellow slippers. It was a frightful apparition, and my heart half failed me for a moment; but I thought of Arabella, and was firm. It could not surely be that she was a monomaniac about dress! I followed her across the common to the sea-beach, and took the number of her bathing-machine. I sat down on the shingle, and drew forth my cigar-case, in order to meditate the more calmly. The sea was dotted with countless sails, and the billows were leaping in the sunlight; the whole face of nature was at its fairest; but my thought was wrapped up solely in that inexplicable being in Number Twenty-two. That she came there regularly, and subscribed by the month, was all the bathing-woman could tell me about her. Was that, I wondered, for the disease which was otherwise extinct in the human species? I waited for twenty minutes, and then out came Mrs. S., precisely as before. My belief was, and is, that she retained those spectacles upon her nose—she HAD a nose—throughout the immersion. I followed her to the centre of the common, and then I spoke. "Mrs. Sandiman, I beg

you will excuse me; but this seems the only chance of my getting a word with you, you are generally so indisposed." No answer. "May I be permitted to ask a question which concerns most nearly one of your accomplished daughters?" No answer. There was a wandering of the eye, and a twitching of the lip, however, as if she was casting about for the fit sentence, and rejecting various others which offered themselves. I began to think that she was dumb,—what a glorious mother-in-law!—but determined upon one more effort. "Have I your permission, my dear madam, to prosecute my endeavours to obtain your daughter's hand?" She answered indeed in the affirmative; but it was in a manner that blasted every hope: by a single word, she betrayed the reason for all the strange precautions and mysterious means which had been taken to keep her dark at Sandwith,—until, at least, the young ladies had been disposed of. It was, in truth, utterly impossible that an alliance with either of them could have been effected without the concealment of their mother. To the following, which I sent to dear Arabella—"After a conversation with your good mother this morning, dear Miss Sandiman, I feel it my painful duty to withdraw my pretension to your affections; but be assured your secret remains safe with me"—I received no answer. The sweet girl understood all at once, and appreciated, I dare say, my delicate generosity. Until this present writing, fourteen years after that interview, I have never disclosed the cause of Mrs. Sandiman's indisposition. So terribly did she leave out her H's, that she couldn't have said heaven to have got there, and would have called me "Arry" to the end of her days.

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